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ABSTRACT

A special issue of Overseas Universities devoted to university libraries contains 10 articles concerning developing nations, particularly Africa. Articles cover: an architect's survey of university library problems; planning libraries in the humid tropics, with emphasis on the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji; aid, funding, and technical assistance; the history and development of the University of Mauritius Library; a description of Trinidad's university library; security problems and book loss in Nigeria university libraries; history and description of the Standing Conference of African University Libraries; the role of the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa in facilitating acquisition of African materials; British book aid for overseas universities; and a comparison of university bookselling in Nigeria and the United Kingdom. (LS)

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No 21

SEPTEMBER 1974

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Our cover is designed by S.A. Boateng. Its main theme is a symbolic undergraduate striding along and holding aloft an academic cap. The triangular patterns on the left symbolize the rapid growth of Universities in all continents. The design at the centre symbolizes the spread of knowledge (light) into all parts of the world.

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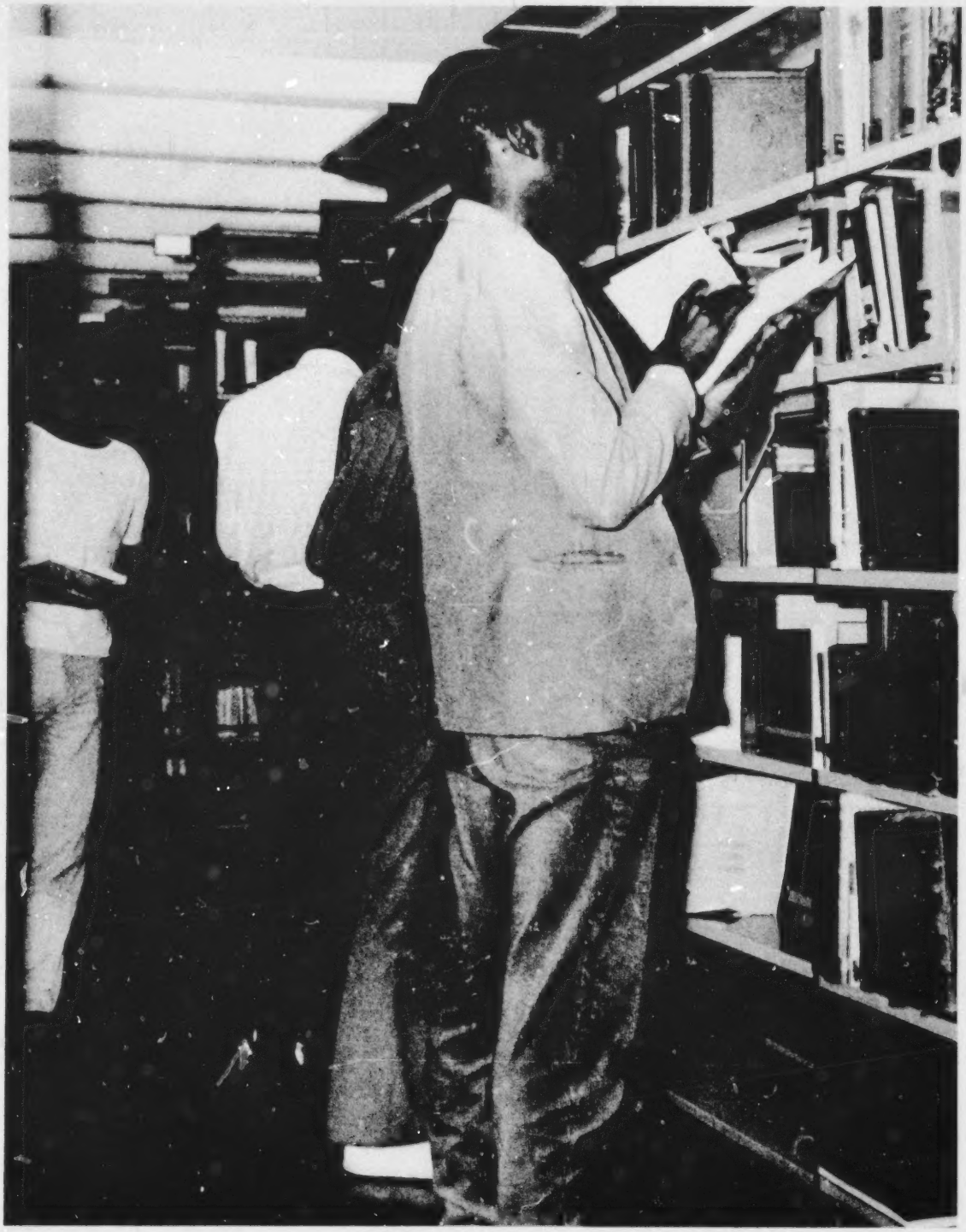

A section of the library at Chancellor College, Malawi

Editorial

Tools of the Trade

On every campus in the developing world, as on the newer campuses of Europe, the University Library is the focal point, in time as well as in place. For not only are books and periodicals the indispensable tools of every faculty (and even the pure sciences need almost as much space now for their abstracts as for their experiments), but its University Library will house the books it now owns long after the campus revolutions of the present will have passed into history. It is of course true, as Mr. Nwamefor reminds us in this special Libraries number of *Overseas Universities*, that libraries everywhere – in Nigeria no less than in Britain – are subject to the depredations of human as well as insect pests. The student pilferer is a selfish nuisance, but at least it can be said for him that he is putting books to their right use, though not in the right place.

The only unforgivable crime in the world of scholarship is to ban or burn a book that scholars need. In stressing how minimal censorship has been in Nigeria, even during the recent war, the article contributed to this issue by Mr. Kemp reminds us that the *Areopagitica* was perhaps as important a gift to the developing world as any of the more recent aid given in the form of library buildings, books, and the training of librarians. The principle of literary freedom is simple and unchanging. The practice of providing books and what is even more important in universities that are not primarily residential, the best conditions to read them in, is one that is subject to continual adjustments in a developing society, so that architects, librarians and administrators all need to be vigilant to the special social needs of the community in which their University is set. And not only the current needs; the rate of social change in a developing country means that minds as well as buildings have to be well supplied with extension joints. Besides the articles in this issue that deal with these problems of flexibility we would like to refer our readers back to Mr. Lim Huck Tee's excellent and comprehensive article on planning Penang's University Library, which appeared in *Overseas Universities 17*.

Two Important Journals

Many readers of *Overseas Universities* must be familiar with *educational broadcasting international* (well, one doesn't *hear* capitals by radio), published now by the British Council; its September 1973 issue, in a new format, has several items of interest to university teachers, notably an interview with Dr. Walter Perry, Vice-Chancellor of the Open University. More recently there has appeared a new, equally lively quarterly: *educational development international*, again published by the British Council, of which the aim is to mirror change and innovation in education around the world. The number that has come to us ranges over many new moves in primary education from the Ivory Coast to Malaysia, and should be of special interest to Institutes of Education. Enquiries to R.C. Sutton, Peter Peregrinus Ltd., P.O. Box 8, Southgate House, Stevenage, Herts SG1 1HQ, England.

Cover wanted

We like our present cover very much, though there are those Poloniuses who can only see it as a charging rhinoceros. But regretfully we have decided – since changes in colour are not limitless – that we shall soon have to send down for good Mr. Boateng's spirited undergraduate flourishing his mortar board and decorated with charming and meaningful Ghanaian motifs. A recent appeal to Schools of Art in the Universities within the I.U.C.'s purview to supply new designs has been unproductive. Could any of our readers design us a new cover, to be printed in black and one colour? The Editor looks forward to receiving designs – and, as always, articles intended for publication – at Rutherford College, University of Kent, Canterbury.

Molly M. Mahood.

Contributors

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Alick Low is a senior partner in the firm of Norman and Dawbarn, who have been architects to a number of African universities as well as to the Royal University of Malta.

Harold Holdsworth is a University Librarian who likes planning new libraries. His guiding hand can be traced at UWI Mona, Makerere, Dar es Salaam and, more recently, the University of the South Pacific.

Anthony Loveday was until recently Librarian to the University of Zambia. He is now based at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, as Secretary to the Standing Conference of National and University Libraries.

Jean de Chantal, who is Canadian, is Library Adviser to the University of Mauritius.

Dr. Alma Jordan is Deputy Librarian of the University of the West Indies in Trinidad.

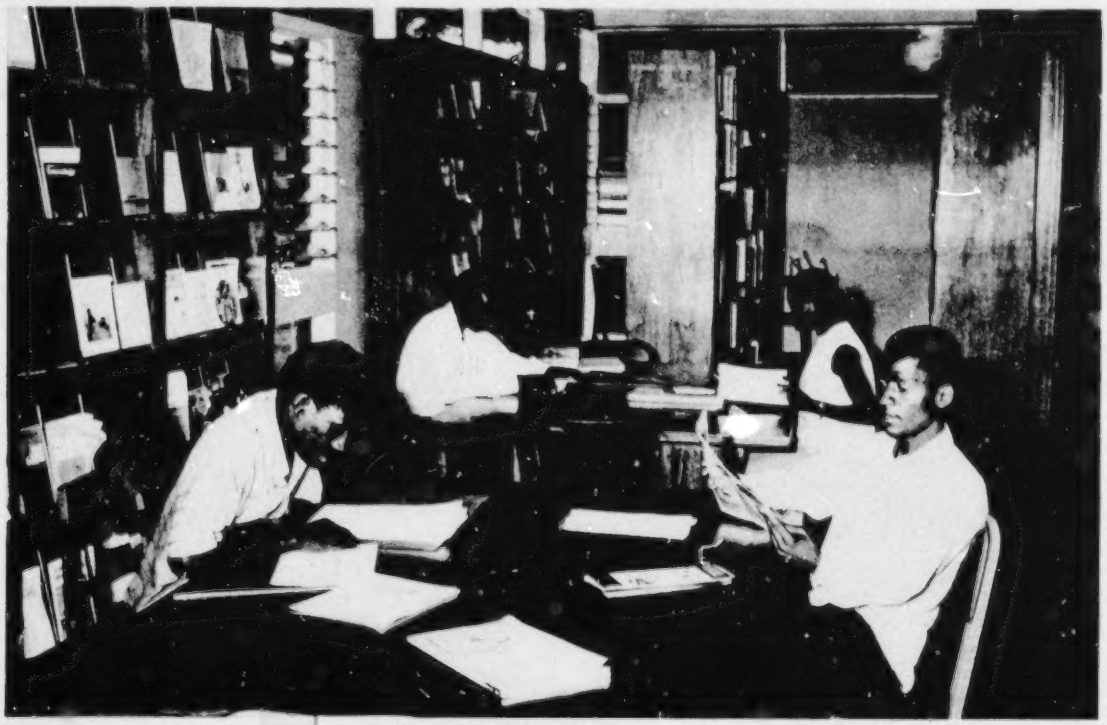
R.C. Nwamefor, who has recently spent a study leave at the University of Alberta, is Sub-Librarian at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Mrs. Rita Pankhurst is University Librarian at the Haile Sellassie I University in Addis Ababa.

Mrs. Patricia Larby is Librarian at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, and is also Secretary of SCOLMA.

Miss D.J. Collihole is Deputy Controller of the Books Division of the British Council.

D.C. Kemp, formerly Manager of the University Bookshop at Ibadan is now managing the University Bookshop at the University of Warwick.



The periodical section of Bunda College Library, University of Malawi

University Libraries in the Developing World
An architect's survey of the problems

Alick Low

An architect's job is to design a building to a brief in such a way that its functional efficiency is enhanced by the creation of an environment, both internally and externally, which is enjoyed by the user.

It might be argued that, providing the items of the brief are given their correct priorities, the solution itself should be a step forward in the general architectural development and that it therefore creates its own aesthetic quality. However, everyone has his own accumulation of environmental associations, based on experience, either functional or romantic, by which he judges a building, even though these judgements are not always supported by reason or genuine aesthetic pleasure.

Architects are sometimes tempted, or even encouraged, to assume that through their training and experience they are entitled to prepare a self-satisfying solution. This may have achieved some notable results in the relatively small world of monuments, but in the case of university libraries, particularly those which have come under the influence of the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas, the range of causes which affect the design is so extensive that they cannot be forced into any preconceived mould.

In the more developed countries the image of a university library is established in most people's minds. The major changes that have taken place in recent years are those of re-organisation, such as the establishment of common cataloguing systems, open access stacking, and the more efficient use of machines for reading and recording, and the exchange of material. These aspects are common to all libraries, but there have been additional problems in countries where previously there has been little or no higher education.

One of the first of these problems has been that the librarian, some of the university staff, and the architect, have often come from other cultural backgrounds which may or may not have had the whole-hearted admiration of the country concerned. The design of a new university library has to be approached with considerable caution and understanding of the nation's needs and ideals. The university and its library can become the centre of national discussion, rather like a new parliament building or airport; a visible and permanent monument to national pride. The danger of introducing incompatible concepts into these important areas of national prestige has to be approached with care, since the importation of alien ideas may destroy confidence in good new methods in the execution of the particular project and, probably more important, in those which follow it.

The sources of finance are often very different and not governed by such rules as, for example, exist in the U.K. with the University Grants Committee. In one case the resources may be so restricted that the result is disappointing in scale and appearance, whereas in another its usefulness may be affected by a donor's wish to be remembered by an architectural gem rather than a simple, spacious and efficient building. However, as one might expect the momentum and consciousness of a new national spirit provides all the inspiration the architect could assimilate, expatriate or not, and there should be no reason for failure on this account.

These overall considerations have to be integrated with more detailed aspects of the library and the unusual quantity and variety of briefing items has led to the conclusion that the overriding requirement for any scheme is that of flexibility. The changes required by growth; the change of use of an area of the building, or even perhaps the temporary use by other departments; the requirements of departmental libraries; the concentration of national resources in the case of printing, special collections and national archives, all point to this prime necessity.

The use of a university library can also change during the early years of its existence. For example undergraduates and staff who may be accommodated in temporary buildings or not resident on a campus, need an environment for study which is different from the time when the university is well endowed with commodious study bedrooms and staff housing. The nature of the library will also change if at the start the university's educational pattern has been based simply on manpower requirements, but later develops a high proportion of postgraduate activity and research facilities.

It is this need to accommodate constant change by which new university libraries can best be judged, and a building which restricts the librarian's freedom to rearrange his stock, or reading or workroom areas, without imposing extensive and costly alterations, or the proliferation of staff, is a constant source of irritation, whereas a library environment should essentially be one of obvious and calm efficiency.

There are other circumstances which affect the physical construction of the building. Terms of

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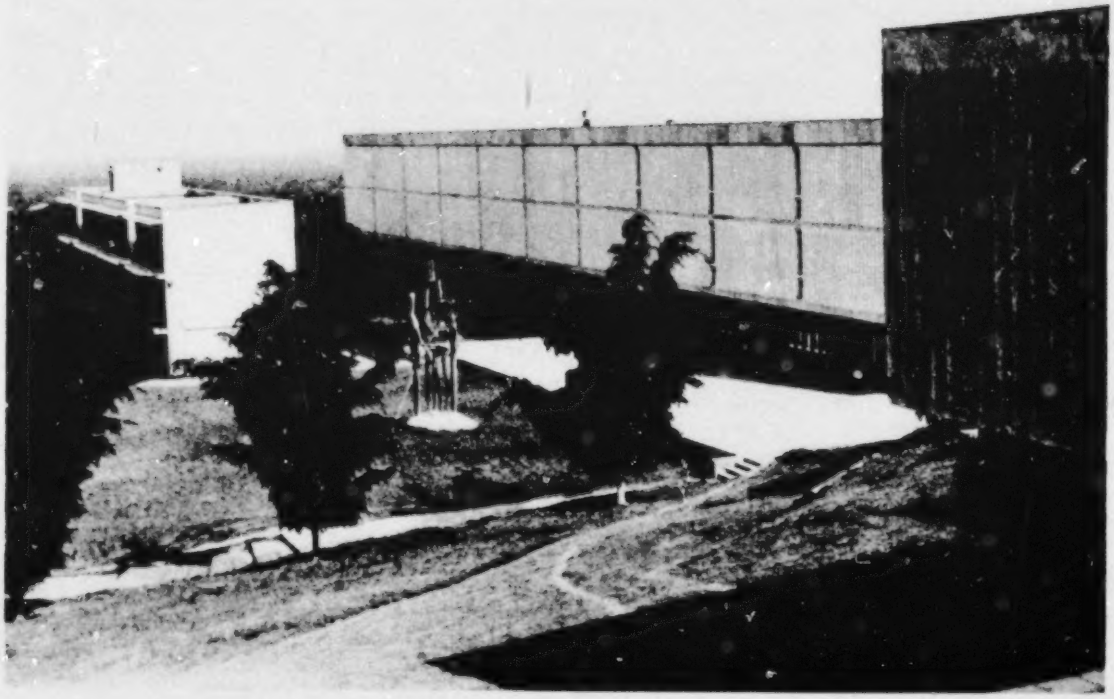

Library building, University of Dar es Salaam. Norman and Dawbarn.

international assistance often require methods of procedure and procurement which cut across local customs and even regulations. It is not generally realised that the design of a building is also governed by the indigenous resources and skills and their method of employment, and even perhaps the encouragement of local industries. In the case where a building contract is open to public tender the design has to be within the capacity of the less efficient builder's capabilities since restricted tender lists have not always been popular with national or international sources of money.

Finally, a library can be a very expensive building in recurrent expenditure, particularly in tropical countries. The preservation of its contents, together with the comfort of its users are the first priorities, and a poor country which is trying to improve its standards by the far sighted investment of higher education, has sometimes to decide whether it can give a few more scholarships or pay an air-conditioning bill.

The problem confronting the architect is, therefore, to try to put all these considerations into a pliable structure, probably of a modular design, which is easy to maintain and fits the standards of equipment, human comfort and building resources most likely to prevail in the years ahead. A university library and its building can probably only be appreciated by those with some knowledge of the problems mentioned in this article. The users themselves may not be aware of them all, but they will react unfavourably to an environment within which they are expected to study if any of these considerations have been omitted from the brief. On the whole the results seem to have been well received and in many cases have made a significant contribution to the developing architecture of the country.

Planning Libraries in the Humid Tropics

with special Reference to the Library of the University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji

Harold Holdsworth

The University of the South Pacific campus was originally a Royal New Zealand Air Force base, extensively built upon, with roads and underground services, and covering an area of about 190 acres. In the University development plan the existing buildings (mainly wooden) were left to be used for as long as possible, and at the time of writing they are not only being used but seem likely to survive well into the future. Obviously they laid constraints upon the University planners, but a plan was eventually devised which enabled all new teaching buildings to be concentrated on a central open site, and other new buildings to be located satisfactorily and with minimum disturbance to existing structures, which were to be phased out gradually. The library was given a central site within the teaching area with the other buildings grouped around it, but with sufficient ground space to allow extensions to it (two are shown on plan) and to insulate it from noise from neighbours. Once the central precinct was completed pedestrian access to the library would be along covered ways, and a service road would lead to the library's rear entrance and loading bay.

The area earmarked for library use was large enough for a first stage building and two extensions to it and for growth beyond that. It was a generous allocation and enabled the architect, Frank Rutter, to plan for the future with more precision. He was able to envisage a building in three stages, to plan the first stage in detail and the others in outline, and to define quite clearly what would be temporary and what would be permanent in the first stage building and therefore to ensure that the extensions to it could be added cheaply and without serious disruption. It was thought important that the conception of the library as a staged development, and of what it might look like in the end, ought to be made known not only from the point of view of forward planning but also because staff and readers would then accept temporary measures for what they were and not as shortcomings in design. The University was therefore able to satisfy two of the library's requirements: a central position within the University and room to expand.

The development plan assumed that the three stage building would take up about 36,000 sq. ft. of ground and afford about 120,000 sq. ft. of internal floor space. This was a handsome forecast and would ensure adequate library provision in relation to the anticipated growth of the University. The first stage would cover 12,500 sq. ft. of ground and in its three storeys would have a floor area of 38,000 sq. ft. The second stage would cover a further 10,750 sq. ft. of ground and add 43,000 sq. ft. to the floor area. The third stage would add 12,500 sq. ft. and 38,000 sq. ft. to the ground and the library floor area respectively. The library would remain a three storey building but with the second stage having a lower ground floor to take advantage of an undulating site.

The library brief asked for a building with a capacity of ten years of growth (1968–1977). This capacity was interpreted as 38,000 sq. ft. which represented what we thought was a minimum estimate for books, an approximate estimate for readers, and a reasonably accurate estimate for all other ingredients of a library space plan over this period. The figure for books and readers taken together we thought would be reasonably accurate although the proportions might vary somewhat from those forecast: the books might be underestimated, the readers overestimated. At the time of writing, after five and a half years, growth has corresponded closely with the estimates. Approximately 10,000 sq. ft. were assigned for stock, 11,000 sq. ft. for readers, and 17,000 for all other services (circulation, issue, catalogues, workrooms, etc.). Since the building was completed and occupied in mid-1972, four and a half years after the establishment of the University and the library, the 38,000 sq. ft. allowed for a further five and a half years growth, to the end of 1977. There was bound to be unoccupied space in mid 1972 which the library calculated it would not need until the end of 1974, when it would need the whole building. The University accepted the proposal for a ten year library building on condition that the unoccupied portion be used temporarily for other purposes. Consequently three quarters of the top floor (8,000 sq. ft.) were set aside as office space for staff members of the School of Social and Economic Development.

Not infrequently when money and accommodation is scarce librarians will be torn between advocating a building for library use only, and therefore for only a few years of growth, and at the risk of it being so small as to prejudice future development, and a building larger than would be needed immediately for library purposes but which would be a satisfactory nucleus of a much enlarged building in the future. If such a choice has to be made we would advocate a tenancy agreement which would ensure that the opportunity was there in future for the proper development of the library. The risk of not getting on

schedule money for a library extension on the one hand, or alternative accommodation for the tenant on the other hand is probably about the same. If funds are not available for the one, they are not likely to be available for the other at the particular time when the library becomes short of space.

At the USP attention was first paid to the floor on which what might be called 'front line' operations are carried out. This key or main floor is usually the entrance floor though not necessarily the ground floor. We thought it should contain the entry/exit, issue, catalogues, reference and bibliography, work areas for cataloguers and for acquisitions, and for the librarian and secretary. It is obviously wise to keep temporary tenants away from such a floor. An upper, preferably the top floor, is better, providing the tenants can be given separate access to it without distorting the basic library plan or incurring expensive temporary measures. This proved to be a useful exercise because it forced us to think about planning staircases away from the library area proper, American style; and finally we were able to allocate to the members of the School of Social and Economic Development a staircase for their own use which would revert to the library staff according to plan at the end of their tenancy.

Owing to the nature of the site the main floor was expected to be the ground floor. In determining how big it should be we were subject to a number of constraints. The first was the University's capacity to pay. While the floor ought to be large enough to take the front-line services for a ten year period (but for no longer) and to allow the services to spread if necessary into the second stage building and yet maintain their physical relationships, it was plain that the height of the building ought not to be lower than three storeys: a two storey building would cover too much building land; and this imposed a limit to the floor size. It was also plain that a building for ten years of growth would have enough unused space as to be unacceptable to the authorities unless there was joint occupation. Thus the desire to get the size of the main floor 'right' (bearing in mind the above factors) and to avoid the separation of interdependent main floor services led us to aim for a larger but jointly occupied building. 11,000 sq. ft. was finally agreed as being the desirable size of the main floor, excluding staircases and lift. 38,000 sq. ft. was the estimate of total floor area including staircases, lift and lavatories. This implied a three storey building. This arrangement was accepted at the planning level, and the main floor therefore would be expected to include all the services listed above as well as a temporary loading entrance.

The total floor area of 38,000 sq. ft. was calculated as follows: 11,000 for 375 readers, being 20% of the enrolment then expected in 1977, at 30 sq. ft. per reader, 10,000 for books at 15 books per sq. ft., for an annual intake of 15,000 volumes over ten years; and 17,000 for 'inflexible' space for all other facilities and services. In the end rather fewer than 37,000 sq. ft. were approved, and it was evident that if the estimate of growth and the space calculations proved to be correct the end of 1977 would certainly be the deadline for the addition of the second stage building.

The overall design for the library was influenced by the size of the first stage, and the shape of the first stage was determined by the overall design of which it was a part. To extend upwards, beyond three storeys, would have required extra strengthening of foundations, columns, and beams, and possibly stricter earthquake precautions at an extra cost which would have had to be offset by a corresponding reduction in the size of the library. We were disposed towards a square or a rectangle as being the most convenient shape, but a square is impossible to maintain in a staged building if extensions are outwards. This left the rectangle. If indeed the library were to cover 37,750 sq. ft. of ground in its three stages a rectangle would have to be reasonably wide in order not to be inordinately long. Width would not have been a problem in an air-conditioned building; but as air-conditioning had been ruled out as too costly the width had to be reconciled with the climate.

Airconditioning, of course, virtually eliminates problems associated with libraries in the humid tropics by excluding most if not all the enemies of books: the sun, excessive light, rain and humidity, insects, rust, fungus, and dust, and that element most vexing to readers – noise coming from outside. Without it all these have to be taken into account, and a building will almost inevitably materialise as one of the many variations on traditional tropical architecture. With airconditioning it could be merely a shell bearing no apparent relation either to climate or place.

The library shape on the ground was conceived as a rectangle in the first stage, a longer rectangle in the second, and an L shape in the third. The weather determined the width and the siting of the building, which was orientated to catch the prevailing south-easterly breezes along its length. The short stem of the L – the third stage – was also positioned to catch them as much as possible. The orientation was not ideal in relation to the rising and setting sun. Window overhangs would cut off the sun's rays at about 20 degrees, but the low sun had to be accepted with the consolation that it occurs at times when the library is least busy. Narrow buildings are traditional in the humid tropics. They encourage cross breezes, but their windows must be protected, usually by some form of external screening, against direct sun and rain. During the period from 1948 when univer-

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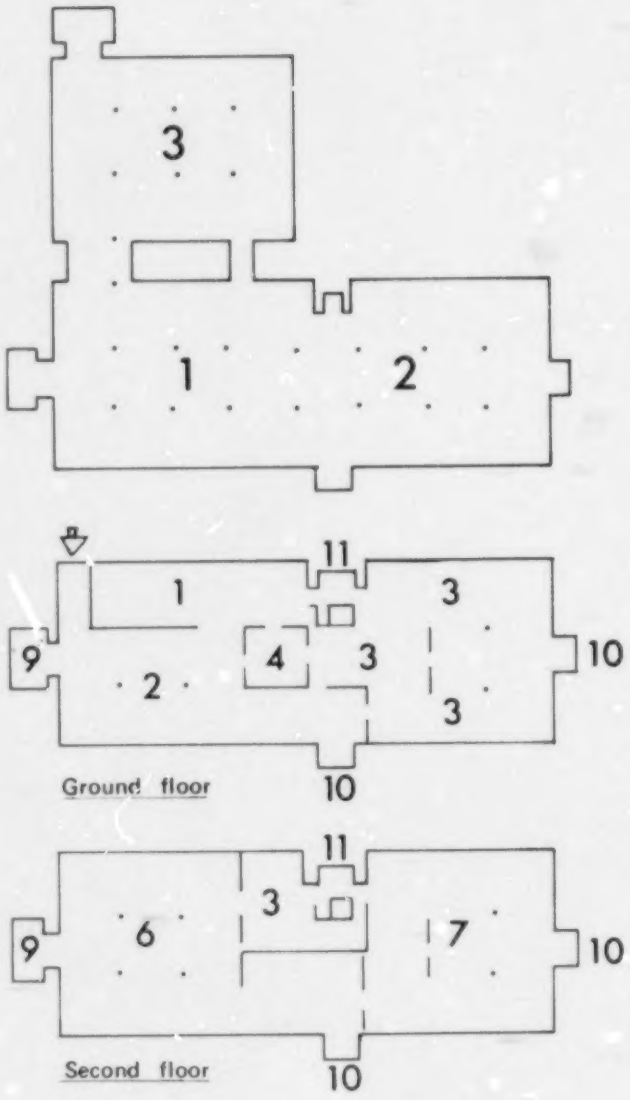
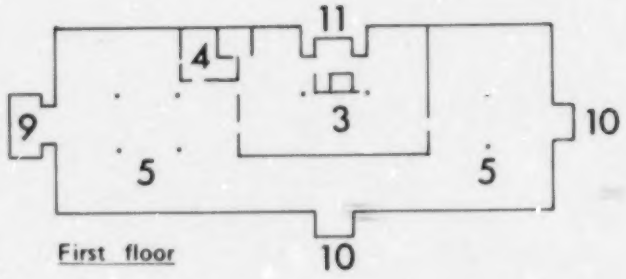
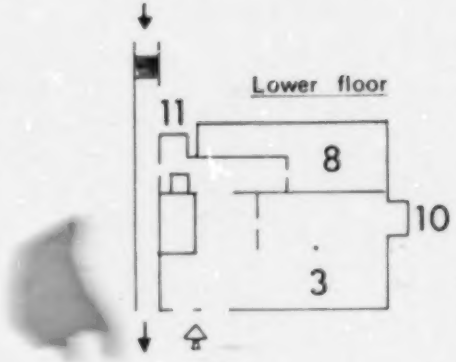
4 Audio-visual
5 Periodicals
6 Books
7 Pacific coll.
8 Staff rest
9 Stairs, toilets
10 Stairs
11 Stairs, lift







sity buildings overseas were being built in earnest many libraries adopted the narrow shape, sometimes compensating for the narrowness by building high or distributing wings around a central court, and so on. But narrowness is not always compatible with flexible library arrangements to which librarians attach a great deal of importance. Moreover narrow buildings can be hot through heat from the wall screening, or uncomfortable through light reflected from it; and relatively expensive because of the higher proportion of walling and windows to interior space. Quite a wide building can in fact be tolerated in the humid tropics provided it is open to cross breezes. The differences in the widths of the following libraries illustrate the gradual appreciation of this fact: the University of West Indies Library (first stage, about 1952) 32 ft. wide; Makerere University Library (first and second stages, about 1959 to 1962) 72 ft. wide; Dar es Salaam University Library (first and second stages, about 1965 to 1971) 88 ft. wide; and the University of the South Pacific Library (first stage 1972) 90 ft. wide; the last three libraries having external screening to add to their overall structural width.

The internal width finally chosen was 90 ft. This gave floor dimensions of 90 by 120 ft. which in the second stage would be enlarged to 90 by 240 ft. So that the floors might not be encumbered with fixtures the staircases were placed at the ends of the building in separate blocks. The 30 ft. (on centres) column spacing in each direction limited free standing columns to six per floor in the first stage and fourteen per floor in the second stage. The open floor area of 10,800 sq. ft. proved to be the maximum uninterrupted area permitted under the local fire regulations. The 30 ft. span, in an earthquake resistant building, was made possible partly through a lightweight wooden roof and lighter than usual floors (twin rib 2 ft. depth precast units with a 2 inch structural concrete topping) which were nevertheless capable of bearing loads of up to 150 lbs per square foot. It was, of course, the width that was important. 90 ft. seemed to guarantee reasonable flexibility against future contingencies. From this point onwards great attention was paid to flexibility (adaptability to change) and standardisation in the internal design and arrangements, to afford opportunity for future changes both in physical layout and in the organisation of the library service itself.

Because the South Pacific is a poor area staffing implications had to be used as a control over design and internal organisation. The fewer staff required, the better. The high cost of staff compared with other library expenditure is obviously a matter of concern to a relatively poor institution. It is often salutary if staffing estimates are weighed against the library situation in the country as a whole and not merely against the demands from within the University itself. During the period since 1948 it must not have been uncommon to find in a developing country that the staff of the university library, particularly qualified staff, equalled or even outnumbered the combined staff of all other libraries. Such a comparison drives one to plan so that a service can be run with the smallest possible number of staff members. It is a powerful factor to be taken into account in assessing future staffing needs. It will affect one's organisation and therefore design. Every time one isolates a service within the library, whether a special collection or a subject division, one establishes a new service point which must be manned. When library opening hours are long, as they usually are, it may be a question not of one person per service point but one and a half or two or more. The USP Library is open 83½ hours per week in term, as against the normal working week for an individual for 37½ hours, and continuous opening of its one special collection does pose a serious staffing problem. Without taking this collection into account the library can be operated in the evenings by a staff of four, and at weekends, when there is a lunch break, with a staff of three, but of course without a staff presence on each floor.

It might be useful to list briefly the measures that were taken to produce a flexible plan for the USP library, all of which must be very familiar to those who have been engaged in library planning.

In the long term plan library staff have been grouped around the stairs and lift at the junction of the L shaped building. Public areas are spread around them mainly along the sides exposed to the prevailing breeze and affording the best views. It is better if work areas are not intersected by public areas and pains have been taken to avoid this. The secondary staircase is planned purely for staff and is inaccessible to readers except in an emergency. A compact staff grouping on each floor, with vertical interconnection, and looking outwards towards the readers in several directions, as it were, offers a varied choice of positions from which the public can be served. The public areas should remain uncongested, particularly as the staircases are in separate blocks at the ends of the library and at the junction of the first and second stage sections. When staircases are sealed off the public areas are insulated against the noise and movement associated with them, and they can be designed more cheaply since they are not, like central staircases, on public show.

Although it was tempting to include internal courts or wells they were omitted. They usually involve extra expense in walling, weather-proofing, and water disposal arrangements; they are definitely fixtures: one has to walk around them; and they are unused space unless they are essential for ventilation.

They add grace and light, and certainly funnel air through a building, but when space is at a premium and ventilation can be reasonably assured without them it is perhaps wiser to dispense with them. They also cut the width of a building into two narrow sections, and we have regarded narrow sections as inflexible elements.

Lest the University should wish to install air-conditioning at a later date a 10 ft. clear space has been left between the false ceiling and the floor, sufficient for exposed ducts.

If stacks and tables have to be moved around or their positions interchanged, as might well be required from time to time, a simple uniform treatment of floors, ceilings, lighting, and stacks offers perhaps the best assurance that it can be done without affecting standards. Good standards will be maintained only if materials used are of reasonably good quality and durable. Economy will be achieved only if the materials can be maintained cheaply. Interchange of units will be easier if a single unit of measurement is followed in selecting and designing shelving and furniture. The utmost flexibility will be possible only if everything that is not strictly structural is movable, not fixed. The architects selected for overall flooring ribbed rubber tiles because they are permanent, can be dry cleaned, and are unlikely to suffer damage when shelves are moved. When cemented to the floor the resonance so often associated with tile flooring is lost, and the ribs enhance the tiles' acoustic properties. The combination of this kind of rubber flooring and an acoustic tile ceiling has in fact justified the use of 7 ft. high removable partitions instead of floor-to-ceiling office walls, in order to encourage cross ventilation.

The architects chose general overhead fluorescent lighting flush with the acoustic tile ceiling, and the tubes – there are nine across the width starting 5 ft. in and then spaced at 10 ft. intervals – run in one direction only, along the length of the building, the illumination being sufficient for stack, reading and work areas. The book stacks are ranged uniformly in the opposite direction across the width of the building, and thus at right angles to the light tubes. The general lighting is fixed but nothing else is fixed in relation to it, and lighting fixtures on movable units were avoided. It is therefore possible to interchange stack and reading areas. The stack arrangement offered another advantage: the ends of the ranges face towards the longer sides of the library, and as the readers tend to be concentrated around the perimeter most of them have direct access to the stack aisles, and conversely can approach their tables directly through the stacks without disturbing readers in general.

In our anxiety not to obstruct cross ventilation selected members of staff, for whom offices were required, were offered only semi-privacy: their office screen walls are only 7 ft. high. Elsewhere "work-rooms" are open areas, because so many of the library's working tools are used by staff in common, and there is a good deal of intercommunication. The success of this arrangement depends of course upon adequate acoustic treatment.

We tried hard to adopt and stick to a standard unit of measurement, and tended to work with multiples of 1′ 6″ when fixing lengths. The open bracket steel shelving is of course in multiples of 3 ft. Tables for readers are 3 ft. by 2 ft. and 6 ft. by 4 ft., and desks are 4′ 6″ x 2′ 6″. Gangways and aisles are planned as 3 ft., 4′ 6″, or 6 ft., or as near as possible. A 6 ft. gangway is in fact considered by us as wide. Spacing between stack ranges is 4′ 6″ on centres of uprights, regardless of shelf widths of which there are only two: 9 inches and 12 inches, double-sided shelves being used for through-shelving of deep quartos and folios.

Maintenance is a problem for all libraries and particularly for an open tropical library. Replacement of worn furnishings, etc. cannot be guaranteed, and we looked for durability when choosing materials, even if the requirements of our library brief were not fully met. Materials that will last and show little deterioration and can be easily and inexpensively cleaned will be the most satisfactory in the long run. They will not be the cheapest materials but neither need they be the most expensive. It seems neither economical nor reasonable that capital money should be spent on buildings so cheap that they soon become waning assets because of high maintenance costs. Conversely a luxury building designed without consideration of upkeep can equally become a burden on the local treasury. Being very conscious of the maintenance problems the architects chose what they considered durable, easily maintained materials within the limits of the grant available. The following is a list of them. Ribbed rubber floor tiles; vinyl tiles for the lavatories; formica (matt vellum finish) for the tops of tables, desks, benches, and sink units; polypropylene moulded chairs; vinyl-faced aluminium-framed office partitions; metal (rather than wood) for furniture frames, shelves, cupboards and lockers; synthetic fluorescent light fittings sealed against insect penetration; plain concrete stairs in the enclosed stairwells. The same standards were applied to structural materials: Plain concrete for the building and sun shields; generous louvre glazing with aluminium frames; fair laced concrete beams; no internal plaster, and the minimum of paintwork inside and none outside. The only concession was hardwood for the framing of window areas and doors, and for the doors themselves.

Maintenance problems arise with technical services as well: plumbing, electricity, and telephones,

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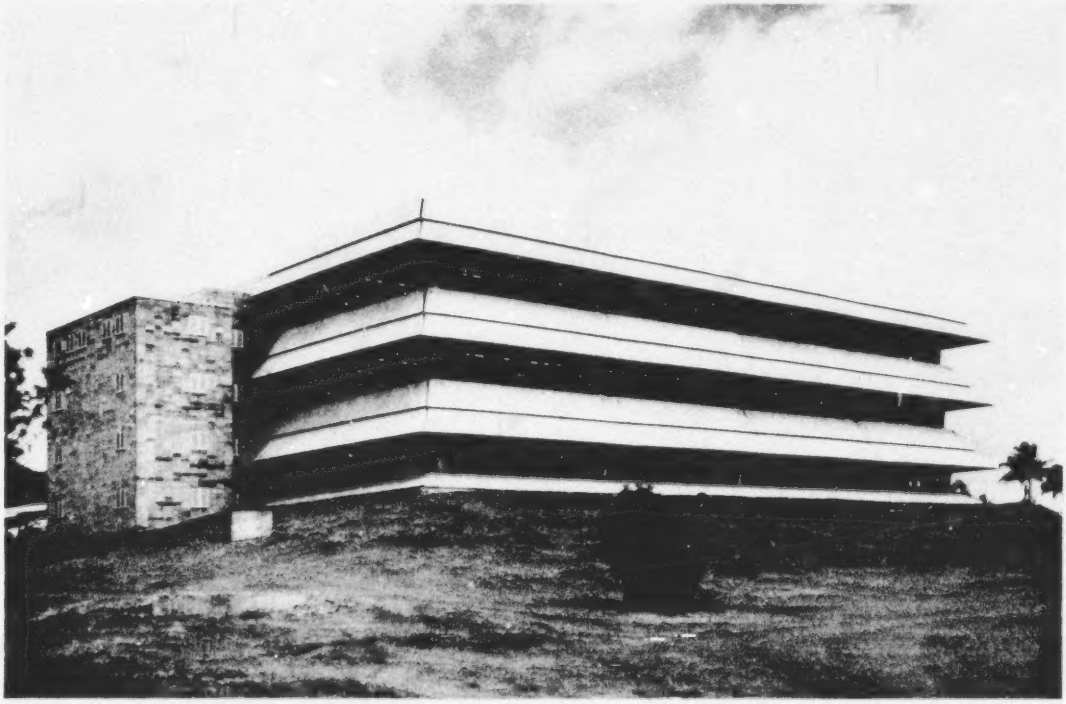
Front of Library, University of the South Pacific. Extension joints for the second stage are on the left.



Rear of building, facing the sea and south-easterly breezes. Photographs: Caines Jannif Ltd., Suva.
Architect: Frank Rutter, FRIBA

each of which is likely to need regular attention. The architects made the installations readily accessible so that repair work could be localised and done without damage around the affected parts. Electric wiring runs in wall skirtings and in selected columns (between the concrete column and its wooden casing) and above the suspended ceiling. Cisterns are in rooms adjacent to the lavatories and accessible only to the plumber. Switch gear is accessible on each landing of the secondary stairs, in large shallow cupboards that can hold nothing else, and are accessible only to library staff.

When the library was designed it was not known how certain technical production services, often associated with library service, would develop. There was much discussion about binding, printing, and photography, but at that time the library could only foresee a need for quick document copying and library binding. Space for document copying was included in the library plan, but the library itself advocated separate development of and separate accommodation for printing and photography, and because a printery would require binding facilities also proposed that library binding be attached to it. A Technical Resources Centre was subsequently established which incorporates both printing and binding. There seemed to be good reason for this advocacy. Control and responsibility could be placed firmly in technical hands. A building could be tailor-made, probably more cheaply than if it were to be included in a library building, and more akin to a workshop. The library would be a major customer only of the binding section, but certainly not the only customer; binding operations would become diversified as the printery developed. The library therefore felt itself free to concentrate on a library service in the strict sense, to lay claim to a quiet library precinct, and to press for the siting of the Technical Resources building, when capital became available, as near as possible to the precinct. Again, in the absence of air-conditioning emphasis has been placed (perhaps obsessively so) on quiet surroundings, and on the physical separation (near to the library but out of earshot) of activities which, although of great interest to the library, are not library activities properly speaking. We would follow the same line of argument in discussing the location of a bookshop or a coffee bar. Similarly in our anxiety to protect readers from noise and movement by casual visitors, and because of lack of space, we limited exhibition space to provide only for library-motivated displays. We would, however, recommend a seminar/laboratory for instruction of library staff in professional matters, since in-service training at the junior and intermediate levels is normally regarded as both essential and urgent in a 'developing' situation, and it is better for it to be done on the premises.

Pressure is often exerted on the library to take over activities for which other places or bidders cannot be found, and on these occasions 'library' is subject to very broad interpretation. Acceptance by the Library might not always be in its own interest or in the best interests of the University. The University of the South Pacific has been fortunate in being encouraged to discuss openly the role of the library and the activities it should undertake, with the result that there has been a considerable centralisation and consolidation of specialised services, outside the library, which we hope in the long run will prove to be both efficient and economical.

Aspects of External Aid and Technical Assistance to Developing Libraries

Anthony J. Loveday

The libraries of recently established universities in the developing countries in nearly every case would appear to have benefited from initial injections of funds to establish their basic book stock and to provide permanent and specially designed buildings. It has been rare for institutions in the Third World to be in the enviable position of being able to provide the very considerable funds necessary for this purpose from their own resources. It is far more common for the institution or government to seek the help of a grant-aiding body in providing an initial development grant for the purpose. This body has usually been a foreign government or international agency, but occasionally a foundation has made the required donation. Each of these organisations has rules and conditions which must be onserved by the recipient, both in regard to the manner in which the application is made and also the actual expenditure of the grant itself. Undoubtedly the generous assistance of these organisations makes possible a programme of development that is much appreciated and would probably not otherwise be achieved. However, whether the source of the assistance is a foreign government or an international agency, the arrangement can have a number of effects upon the library's development which may be undesirable and are perhaps worthy of closer examination.

When the funding of the construction of the library has come from an external source there has in the past been a tendency to relate the standards

upon which the library has been planned with either theoretical 'international' norms or with norms adopted by the assisting country. Undoubtedly it has been of very considerable help and a guarantee of international acceptability to have the local expertise reinforced by the technical advice from areas where established library services exist. Nevertheless there is a very real danger that the norms adopted may be unrelated to the economy and needs of a developing country and the real life-style of its people. It can be argued that drawing upon foreign expertise does ensure that optimum standards are reached and that a building so constructed provides a pattern for the future development and planning. All too frequently, however, the building is constructed in a style and at a level of cost that is inappropriate. Sometimes the building incorporates the use of sophisticated equipment which cannot be maintained or kept in an operating condition because of the lack of adequate resources – either with regard to skilled manpower or the availability of supplies. While it may be true that in the new institution conservative attitudes are less likely to have an inhibiting effect upon its development, the establishing of a new approach or the implementation of new ideas, there is equally a danger that extravagant and unrealistic schemes may be imposed by the itinerant expert who will have become disassociated with the project long before he can be called to account for his errors in judgement.

Another area for the application of external aid for a new library is in the provision of non-recurrent grants for the building up of book collections. The system of non-recurrent grants is a convenient method of ensuring that considerable sums of money are set aside for this purpose and at the same time makes possible the spread of the library's book acquisition over an extended phase of development. Nevertheless there are consequent problems. Injections of capital grants from external sources may result in inadequate recurrent provision being acknowledged and planned by institution or government. This in turn may undermine the continuing development of the library's collections. Government officers concerned with the university's financial provision frequently have only a limited understanding of university problems and an even smaller knowledge of the characteristics and needs of its library services. It is important that from the outset a clear pattern of realistic expenditure on the book collections be established, and that an awareness exists that this is an expensive and on-going requirement which will not cease by the mere acquisition of a certain number of volumes. Furthermore the library may well find itself incapable of spending a large grant over a short development period quite simply because it does not have staff with the right expertise or in sufficient numbers to process book orders in an efficient manner. This may in turn give rise to an impression that the library has received an over-provision of funds, with a consequent reduction in recurrent funds. This tends to happen just at the time when the development grant is nearly exhausted or lapses. It is therefore important that consideration be given to the appointment of supernumerary staff to deal with the establishment of the book collections during the early development stages. Some care must also be taken to ensure a balance is achieved between recurrent local financial resources and external non-recurrent book development grants.

Some agencies prefer not to entrust the expenditure of grants for book collections to the institution but require the submission of lists by the library to the grant-aiding authority. The authority then vets the request before purchase and supply of the books is made. From its point of view this has the advantage of enabling it to continue its assessment of the type of need that exists and of ensuring that extravagances are eliminated. However the library usually experiences very considerable delays before it receives the books through these channels, and these may be urgently required. For this reason it may have to purchase items from its limited budget which it would have preferred to allocate to the development grant. This may also result in aid grants lying unused because of the difficulty of delaying orders so that lists can be cumulated to the size required by the aiding authority. It is not always appreciated by the authority that local expertise as to requirements exists and not infrequently a library spends considerable time and limited staff resources in preparing for submission to an agency a list of items which then is rejected by the agency's own expert on the grounds of unsuitability, based upon an inaccurate assessment of that library's need. Sometimes, too, funds unavoidably only become available to a project at short notice and must be spent within a very limited period. This can put great stress upon a library in its early development when it is struggling with a limited number of staff to cope with the day to day operation of its routines. When money is short this is both tantalising and frustrating. Generous as agencies have been, it is sad that the effectiveness of their generosity has been reduced either because of inflexible rules or because of preconceived ideas of need; there have been occasions when the most beneficial area for assistance has been that specifically excluded.

Associated with the physical development of the library is the provision of trained library staff. At the time most university libraries are established in the developing countries there is a dearth of suitably qualified local personnel. Again the agencies providing external assistance have assisted by financing and recruiting staff with considerable experience.

Without this assistance development would certainly be slow. But, as with the planning of the buildings, this may result in the establishment of a service that is alien to local need and unreasonably sophisticated. The dilemma facing libraries in this situation is how to reconcile the technical advances in library organisation and management, which are the outcome of an established library service, with the characteristics of a society having a large but unskilled available labour force. The demands of that society may require the conscious development of a library service based on a traditionally manual operation, but which will become rapidly outmoded as development proceeds. Also the university library may be required to undertake roles and activities that would not be required of it elsewhere. Such factors may not be appreciated or sympathetically acknowledged by the temporary expatriate personnel. Another aspect of the same problem is the inevitable short term commitment of such staff: no agency is likely to prolong its sponsorship and funding of personnel beyond the comparatively short term of its involvement in the project. Apart from discouraging the effective orientation of the expatriate into the local needs this may also not be in the best interests of the library's development: stability of library policy and its consistent implementation are essential for the establishment of an effective service. This can only be achieved by continuity. It is unfortunate that it is precisely at a time when continuity is of such importance that dependence upon short term appointees is so great.

Linked with the provision of expatriate professional staff during the early phases of the library's development is the provision by agencies of funds for the training of local staff to meet the long term needs. In the past this has most frequently been done by making available bursaries to enable locally recruited staff to attend courses of training at established centres outside their own country. Increasingly has come acceptance of the view that it is preferable that the basic training be provided locally and that opportunities also be provided for advanced study outside the country after this. It has been recognised that there is likely to be a closer relationship between the training acquired and the needs and outlook of the particular country if this is the method adopted. Agencies have shown sympathy with this and have been willing to assist in the provision of suitably qualified expatriates to operate the local training centre. But here too there is the conflict between the availability of suitably experienced and qualified teaching staff and the desirability of having such staff correctly oriented. The production of locally trained professional staff, capable of developing and operating the services in a direction that is totally in terms of the real needs of the country and the institution, will only be achieved when the alien elements are diminished and when the locally oriented teacher is himself influencing the direction of the training of the professional staff.

Many of the points raised here are inevitably in conflict and it is difficult to see how the dissident factors can best be reconciled. The establishment of these services with the assistance of external organisations and alien personnel is inevitably a compromise. It is important however that it be recognised by all the parties concerned that there is bound to be wastage of both manpower and finance during the total development period. It must also be acknowledged that included in this development concept is the emergence and establishment of the locally oriented system with probable abandonment of the early alien ideas which were imported as a foundation base, and without which a start could not have been made.

THE SUPPLY OF MICROFILM AND PHOTOCOPIES FOR OVERSEAS LIBRARIES

From an early stage in its history the IUC provided services in support of the libraries of its associated universities. The Carnegie Corporation of New York initially helped to make this possible by financing the appointment of Dr. Richard Offer, Emeritus Librarian of the University of Leeds. He instituted arrangements whereby articles required for research were located, permission for copying obtained and the copy despatched promptly by air. With the help of the University of London Library in particular, many hundreds of microfilms were supplied, thus helping to offset the difficulty often faced by academic staff in overseas universities through limited access to back-runs of periodicals.

In 1971, however, the operation was discontinued partly because possible alternative arrangements were available and partly because the IUC wished to introduce new services in support of library development, particularly by helping in the training of locally-born library staff from the overseas universities.

Negotiations have, however, recently been held with the Lending Division of the British Library at Boston Spa, as a result of which arrangements have been introduced which will enable the libraries of IUC associated universities overseas to benefit from the unrivalled services of that Library. The cost of providing photocopies to the IUC associated universities will be borne by the IUC to an agreed financial limit annually. In this way it is hoped to help academic staff overseas in their research while at the same time avoiding any difficulties over payment which might otherwise arise through the operation of exchange control regulations.

The University of Mauritius Library: its Development and Evolution

Jean de Chantal

Although the University of Mauritius was created in 1965 and effective work started only in July 1968 (the University of Mauritius Act was proclaimed in 1971), its library can be said to be very much older; in fact, it dates back to 1925, the year of the inauguration of the old College of Agriculture, around which the present University was to grow and which it was eventually to absorb. Its collections in the field of agriculture are therefore especially rich. In 1962, the libraries of the Department of Agriculture, also located in Réduit,[1] and of the College were merged. They were to form the nucleus of the present University Library.

In 1968 the Library moved a first time into a small building (2,200 square feet) donated by Barclay's Bank D.C.O. (as it was then known) to mark the accession of Mauritius to Independence; it was destined to be used eventually as a students' union. Realising the amplitude of the task at hand, the Government of Mauritius appealed to the Canadian International Development Agency for assistance in obtaining the services of a Library Adviser to help in the reorganisation of the collections, in developing them in line with the demands to be made by the three Schools (Administration, Agriculture and Industrial Technology), and to train the staff who would take over at the end of his stay in Mauritius, in March 1974. It might be appropriate to mention here a few highlights in the development and evolution of this Library.

On taking up his post in July 1970 the Library Adviser, without wishing to use the 'new broom' approach too much, attended to such housekeeping chores as getting the four catalogue drawers to open and close without too much of a physical strain (a wood rasp file did the job), removing the signing-in register (an anachronism in a twentieth century library, the sole purpose of which was to compile yearly statistics on library use), and weeding the 'current' periodicals racks of year-old materials.

There were close on 12,500 books, including bound periodicals, in the Barclay's building and many more were left behind in the College of Agriculture and in the loft of the Naval Museum in Mahébourg, 25 miles away, for lack of space. The School of Administration was installed with its own sectional library a few miles away in Rose Hill, while the Centre d'Administration des Entreprises with its collection of books in French on business administration was ensconced in the former residence of a Governor-General's equerry, near Le Réduit's entrance. All these sections would eventually have to be weeded and merged into a cohesive whole if the transformation to a modern university library were to be achieved.

A new building had to be contemplated. Its design was entrusted to the firm of Norman and Dawbarn, well known throughout Africa for the many academic buildings which bear their trade mark. The building, its shelving and card catalogue cabinets were financed by the Overseas Development Administration. Construction was just getting under way in July 1970, when I arrived; it was to be 10,200 square feet, nearly five times the size of the Barclays building, enough to accommodate 50,000 volumes, and to last (it was hoped) a minimum of five years. Space for 75 readers was provided.

The priority job at hand during construction was to try to put some order in the existing collections: the catalogue was not up to the standards of a university library, however small it might be; the inventory of periodicals on hand was in a lamentable state, and so was the order of serials themselves on the shelves. At a time like this, one reflects on the similarity that exists between such a situation and that of a city planner: how much more pleasurable it would be to work à la Niemeyer in Brasilia, than to have to demolish in order to reconstruct.

A close examination of the card catalogue revealed that it would have to be done over again. The Library Committee approved the idea of adopting, in the process, the Library of Congress classification scheme and the dictionary catalogue: two firsts for Mauritius. In addition to this, and in preparation for the final move into the new building, the periodical collection was arranged in strict alphabetical order of title, a new inventory on Kardex was started and orders for the purchase of Library of Congress catalogue cards were placed. Moving a library is in itself a sufficiently traumatic experience for any librarian: transferring a disorganised collection of books from one building to another was unthinkable. Hence the impression given that the Library Adviser, during his first twelve months or so in Mauritius, was doing nothing but moving bundles of books from one shelf to another, without accomplishing very much that was tangible in the process.

During this time, one of the Divisional Libraries was itself getting ready to move to the campus: the School of Administration was occupying its new

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University of Mauritius Campus. The library is the nearly square building in the centre of the picture.

quarters in which a small room was set aside to be used as a temporary library until the new building in turn was ready for occupancy. As M day approached, it was decided to take the opportunity of the move to disinfect all the books which were to come into the new building. This meant organising a move-within-a-move, to a vacuum fumigation chamber which had been graciously placed at our disposal by the Tobacco Board of Mauritius. A simple exercise in itself, were it not for the fact that the Board's warehouse was five miles distant and the move coincided with the rainy season. This détour proved eventually to be a blessing in disguise for although the new building was finished and ready for occupancy the shelving had not arrived from overseas. All that was left to do was to empty the old shelves of their content and place the books in numbered boxes, dismantle the shelves and set them up again in the new building during which time the books were being disinfected in Port Louis. A wonderful exercise for PERT, but it went off quite smoothly, somehow. And the aroma of tobacco was unmistakable! Library service resumed in the new building after being suspended for only ten days. There only remained the setting up of the new shelves which finally arrived a month later.

The availability of textbooks in Mauritius leaves very much to be desired and the question of setting up a university bookshop was studied, with the collaboration of the British Council, which invited the Book Development Council's Bookseller Officer to visit Mauritius. However, without dismissing entirely this possibility, the University felt it ought to devote all its resources at this time to the developing of its Library.

But organising a university library involves a lot more than moving books around and installing shelving. What about the readers, academics and students, and *their* problems, budgetary appropriations of a scale never before contemplated, recruitment and training of personnel to handle the extra load of work engendered by better library service, developing and completing existing collections?[2] The key to success in this phase of a library's development rests squarely with the university's administration; without a thorough understanding 'from above' of the problems at this important stage, no librarian can achieve much. And here, I must pay tribute to the frank collaboration given by Dr. P.O. Wiehe, who recently stepped down as Vice-Chancellor. Without his unstinting support, there wouldn't be a university library in Mauritius today.

After the achievement of a good start – by October 1971 the two divisional collections were integrated with the main one – attention could now be devoted to other pressing matters. The Library was granted United Nations depository status for Mauritius and was chosen as a 'selective depository' for the receipt of official publications issued by the Government of Canada. It was also designated by law[3] to receive on automatic distribution one copy of each publication edited in Mauritius, with the exception of newspapers, serials and official documents which are not covered by the Act. The University Library thus joins the National Archives and the Mauritius Institute as one of the three legal depositories in the Island. (The Act also provides for a copy of the same publications to be deposited in the British Museum, la Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and the Library of Congress).

Attention was then turned to the Library staff with a view to improving their status and obtaining better recognition for their performance. A paper seeking academic recognition for professional librarians in respect of salary, conditions of service and other entitlements has been prepared for the consideration of Senate and Council. Job descriptions were prepared for semiprofessional library technicians, binders, pressmen and microfilm camera operators.

During this time, the University's development continued unabated and at an accelerated rate, to such a degree that the Library building which had been thought adequate for a minimum of five years was barely able to accommodate all those wishing to make use of its facilities; requests for lengthening the hours from 9 a.m. to 6 by one hour at each end of the day are on the agenda of the next Library Committee meeting. Consideration therefore had to be given to the question of planning the extension right away. A request for funding was approved and every indication points to the European Development Fund assisting the Government of Mauritius in providing financial backing for the new wing, the brief for which has already been submitted to the architects: its total capacity will then become 150,000 volumes.

A third problem, although not immediately related to the University Library, has nonetheless far-reaching implications for the future: the education and training of Mauritain librarians, of whom only a handful in the whole island can boast of having had any professional training. The Ministry of Education, concerned at this state of affairs, requested the University to look into the possibility of launching a one-year part-time certificate course for library technicians, and there is a good chance of this project seeing the light of day in the not too distant future. Exciting possibilities exist, due to the English-French bilingual nature of Mauritius, for eventually making these facilities available to candidates coming from neighbouring Réunion Island and even the Seychelles, both of which are totally lacking in library training facilities.

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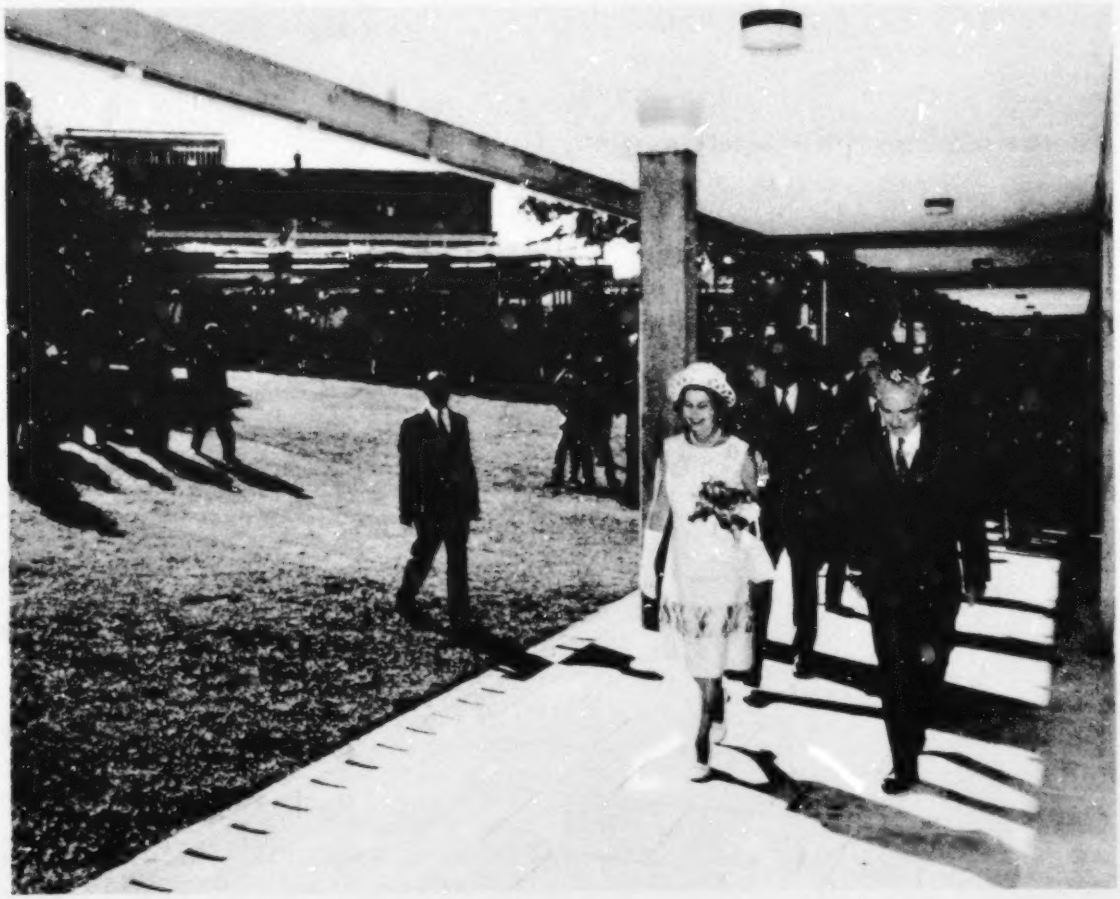

HM The Queen, escorted by Mr. Jean de Chantal, Canadian Library Adviser, during a visit to the library on the occasion of the Inauguration of the University of Mauritius, 24 March 1972

In Mauritius, where libraries are few and not too well developed or staffed, with some of them either in their dormant or infant stages, the University Library considers it as part of its responsibility and function to extend its facilities to those in industry, commerce and government who require specialized materials to support their activities. For some time to come, it will be seen that the University Library will be called upon to play an increasingly important role, not only in supporting local librarians in providing better services to the community, but in contributing to the economic development of the country itself.

[1] 'Le Réduit' is the name of a nearby beautiful residence surrounded by magnificent gardens, started by David (1746–1753), the second Governor of Ile de-France: it was originally destined to be used as a "retreat" for women and children in case of an invasion by the English. It continues, to this day, to be used as the Governor General's residence.

[2] Most of these topics appeared on the agenda of the second meeting of the Standing Conference of African University Libraries, Eastern Area (SCAULEA), which was hosted by the University of Mauritius in April 1973.

[3] The Archives (Amendment) Act, 1973. (Act no. 3 of 1973).

Trinidad's University Library

Alma Jordan

The University Library at St. Augustine has a comparatively long and unusual history. Over 70 years ago it began as a special library serving the Imperial Department of Agriculture for the West Indies which was established in Barbados. When this department was merged with a new College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad in 1921 its library was transferred to the College. A 40-year period followed during which the library developed a fine collection to meet the needs of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad. In 1960 when this College in turn was merged with the University of the West Indies, the library embarked on a third phase in its history. Its emergency as a university library catering to the teaching and research needs of a full programme at undergraduate and graduate levels climaxed in the occupation of the new John F. Kennedy building in October 1969. The formal opening of the new library on January 30th, 1970 by the Chancellor H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone officially marked the beginning of a new era in library service to the university community at St. Augustine.

The building is one of eight comprising the John F. Kennedy College of Arts and Science - a gift of the Trinidad and Tobago Government to the University of the West Indies made possible under the terms of assistance by the U.S. Government towards major projects in Trinidad arranged in the revision of the Anglo-American Agreement. Planning for the development of a College of Arts and Science and the new buildings to accommodate it began in early 1961. A full programme statement for the library was prepared in July 1962. In November of that year the architectural firm of Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum Inc. of St. Louis, Missouri was awarded the design contract by the U.S. Government and the first sketches were drawn shortly thereafter. The final plans were approved late in 1964 and tenders were invited. The contract was finally awarded to Tom Philip Construction Company and work on the site began in November 1965. The foundation stone for all the buildings was laid by the Chancellor on January 31st, 1966. Originally scheduled for completion in 1967, construction was delayed for several months when the original contract had to be withdrawn. Work was resumed in 1968 by the firm George Wimpey & Company and the other buildings were completed by the end of the year.

The library was the last building to be taken forward by the new contractors and it was completed and occupied in September 1969 immediately prior to the beginning of the new academic year. The time lapse between early planning and completion of the building was such that several new developments arose during construction and the Government approved plans for an extension of the first floor to accommodate some of these developments. The design of the master plan for the college buildings centres on the library as the physical and intellectual heart of the campus. Flanked by the Auditorium on the west and the Faculty of Arts Building on the east, the library has an attractive 4-storey exterior.

The building has a total floor area of 47,664 square feet on the modular plan with 21,000 linear feet of shelving and a 150,000 volume capacity. Over 9,000 square feet are devoted to staff work areas mainly on the first floor. Provision has been made for vertical expansion by the addition of 2 storeys. Present holdings are equivalent to over 100,000 volumes and annual additions amount to some 10,000 volumes. Over 400 seats are provided in study carrels and informal reading areas. Separate rooms are available for typing and the reading of microform materials. Informal reading areas are emphasized by bright-coloured area rugs and lounge chairs. They take full advantage of the views of the northern range of mountains and add to the general feeling of spaciousness.

The building is equipped with full environmental controls to protect the collections. These safeguards include air-conditioning to regulate temperature and humidity as well as light control to guard against fading.

The walls are of concrete stock with a natural grey finish which contrasts effectively with mahogany framed windows. Dark brown cork panels cover interior perimeter walls for additional temperature and humidity control.

The collection is divided into three broad subject divisions each housed on one of the upper floors. In this arrangement members of the staff and students are able to consult all the material pertinent to their special subjects in one place. A professional librarian works on each floor to offer reference service.

The University Library is the most important intellectual resources of the academic community. Its collection aims at presenting the heritage of scholarly thought in all its richness. The library's major goal is to offer specialized materials and services to the university community of specialists. The new JFK building admirably provides the physical facilities for this service.

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The Library, St. Augustine Campus, University of the West Indies.

Interior, showing one of the informal reading areas.

Exterior at sunset.

Security Problems of University Libraries in Nigeria

R. C. Nwamefor

Higher education is relatively new in Nigeria, and most of her universities are under twenty years old.[1] Because of this tender age and for other historical and economic reasons, her university libraries are still a long way from attaining minimum standards of adequacy in their resources.

The American Library Association recommends that a minimum of 5% of an institution's recurrent budget should be spent on its library and more if the collection is deficient or if there is a rapid expansion in student population or course offering.[2] An actual investigation into the expenditure of a large group of American university libraries for 1958–59 shows that the above percentage was in excess of the actual median which for this group averaged 3·7%. In Great Britain, it came to 3·2% in the six largest universities (excluding Oxford, Cambridge and London) and to 4·5% in the six smallest ones.

Resources available for university education in Nigeria are, of course, greatly limited in comparison with those in Great Britain or the United States. It is therefore felt, in some responsible Nigerian university circles, that each university library in Nigeria has, of necessity, to be reasonably self-sufficient, since ours does not possess the library infrastructure of a developed country and therefore needs much more than just 4 or 5 percent of the annual recurrent budget.[3] There are no developed public or specialised library systems to supplement university collections. Instead, it is even expected that Nigerian university libraries should take it as part of their responsibilities and functions to extend their facilities to those who require specialised material in industry and high level administration. Nor are these university libraries richly endowed; for apart from the Henry Carr collection at Ibadan,[4] the Nnamdi Azikiwe collection at Nsukka and a more recent Joint University Council book programme at Nsukka and Benin, there is scarcely anything in the Nigerian university scene that is comparable to famous collections donated to British and American universities. Most library acquisitions in our home universities are, therefore, purchased from the lean library quota in the universities' annual budget.

To secure what has been thus painfully acquired has not been easy. Indeed, the real anguish in building up library collections in Nigerian universities is the fact that more and more library materials appear to be finding their way into students' lockers and book shelves in their halls of residence. For example, at Nsukka which was adversely affected by the civil war, the number of library books lost during the fighting is staggering. This has much limited the number of books available to each undergraduate who because of indigency cannot afford to buy personal books in the face of his other innumerable wants. While Nsukka groans under the weight of its prized war losses, racking its head on how to span the arrears of three years of publishing, with foreign exchange control that even affected book purchase by universities, its undergraduates devise various ingenious means of building up their individual holdings from the already much depleted general stock. This trend is as true of Nsukka as it is of even those universities that did not see the war.

In the early years of higher education in this country, strict security of library stock was not considered such an indispensable factor. This was because most librarians would rather help than supervise those who use their buildings; they have no desire to act as police officers and are eager to make controls as inconspicuous as possible if they cannot be totally eliminated.[5] Unfortunately, as students grow increasingly serious and need less supervision within the building, they seem to be tempted more and more to appropriate library materials extra-legally; the problem is particularly serious in the case of such reserved books as Africana.

The University College, Ibadan, which blazed the trail among Nigerian universities, started on sound English traditions. At Ibadan, library security, in the sense of a gateman to ensure that what books individual staff and students took out of the library were indeed officially borrowed, was up to 1964 considered a vulgarity that should not be associated with university gentlemen. But one who knew these students rather intimately during those years would easily testify that in at least this sense of illegal removal of library books and journals, a good number of U.C.I. undergraduates were culprits. It used to be a very rewarding library exercise in those days to comb students' rooms in the halls of residence after the sessional exams, year after year. When the introduction of regular checking was mooted and reemphasised at Ibadan, the idea was greeted with extreme caution and a lot of reluctance; but the increasing annual losses as borne out by statistics, clearly indicated that a non-implementation of such a policy was a mere postponement of an evil day. By now, the seriousness of the problem has eventually forced Ibadan to join in a strict search of readers as they leave the portals of her library, so that what was by 1964/65 a courteous spying on gentlemen has now matured into a rigid and meticulous search.

A University of Lagos feature, named 'A Conscience Exhibition' was recently reported in one of our weeklies.[6] Its purpose, according to the organisers, was to display, for general notice, readers' misuse of the university library. Apart from 50 books and journals defaced, soiled or mutilated by unknown students there were also on display a list of 89 books that had been stolen from the library. The organisers tried a categorisation of the stolen books in an attempt to indicate degrees of participation by the various faculties – an angle that is not foolproof in a university with the 'Course System'. Also on display was a list of some 25 books stolen or displaced in the exhibition. Two known methods by which books were stolen from the library are by throwing them down through the tiny windows (made particularly tiny to prevent this from happening) and by getting 'pregnant'. Female students allegedly fill up their skirts and blouses, wrappers or slacks with stolen books, while male students load up their trousers, shirts and 'agbada' dresses with textbooks. Some sketches put up at the same exhibition showed just how some of these dodges were organised. According to a statement credited to the Lagos University Librarian, about 0·6% of library books get stolen from his library annually, but as he also remarked, if even only one book is removed dishonestly from the library, yearly, without replacement, the library will one day become empty.

The frequency of this drift and more especially the quality of what is lost, clearly indicates the seriousness of the situation and appears to necessitate most of the means that could be adopted as a check. Ibadan prevaricated for long, trying to see how to get the unborrowed library materials from her ladies and gentlemen without introducing the unpleasantness that obviously goes with searching. This was an expensive delay, which many of the new universities may not be able to afford. Added to this is the effect of the generation gap on the attitude of the Nigerian undergraduate. In the 1940's he has become more Machiavellian, more materialistic. Unlike his 1940 compatriot, what matters most to him is what degree he takes out of the university; the ethical side of his education could be thought about later! The librarians at Nsukka decided on early checking which, right away, was both regular and thorough. There is, by now, scarcely any Nigerian university library that has not followed suit. And until recently, this has paid a lot of dividends, judging from a periodic check on the reports of the security men. The Lagos University case file, for example, shows that three students, from the Political Science department in 1967, the Education department in 1971, and the Humanities in 1972, have so far been apprehended for stealing library books.

For quite some time now, it has become sadly obvious that even with this thorough searching at library entrances, many unborrowed materials have still found their way into students' rooms. Although the effectiveness of the searching has been promoted by limiting the number of exit gates, this 'prison effect' must be kept within bounds if only to ensure adequate library ventilation in a tropical climate. At Nsukka, there is the added problem of a slow rate of postwar rehabilitation of the library for over two years, which for long left the openings without the burglarproof netting that could prevent a known practice of helping certain books to fly out through the windows. There is also, currently, among Nsukka librarians, talk of a clever device employed by a few hardened students to beat the library security men at the entrance. According to an informant, all the offending student needs as his clue is to borrow one book through the normal procedure. After this, he can, be detaching the 'date due slip' from this first book and sticking it, one at a time, on to other unborrowed books from the library open stacks, take away as many books as he could before the expiry date on the 'date due slip'. These dishonest students hatched the plan from a careful observation of the security men, which revealed that the security men, by and large, depended on the 'date due slip' in deciding between what is properly borrowed and what is not.

What to do about these lost books had proved a recurring dilemma to Nsukka librarians. An important factor here is that unless some sharp jolt is given to these students, this dangerous drift would continue and may even gain momentum. In order to combat this drift, it was eventually decided to conduct a surprise search of students' halls of residence for unborrowed library materials. The ideal would have been to search all the hostels, but in view of the shortage of library manpower, the secrecy the operation required and the need to go through the hostels at the same time if the search was to be effective, it boiled down to a sample search of only three student hostels randomly selected but still so scattered as to ensure that the impact of the exercise was felt by all the students. Each searching team was made up of library staff (these were in the majority) university security men and a few carpenters. The cooperation of the Hall Counsellors (staff advisers to hall residents), and student hall leaders, as well as that of key university officers connected with the plan was obtained. The operation started around 1 p.m., simultaneously in the selected Nsukka hostels and in all the halls at Enugu Campus, and lasted, at Nsukka, until around 3 p.m. From our observation, most of the students are in their rooms by 1 p.m. and there are no lectures, practicals, or games till well after 3 p.m.

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We had to choose such a time since part of our strategy for a successful operation was not to send any advance notices that would arouse anxiety.

The search went on at the same time in every floor of every hostel involved. The effectiveness of the University Librarians's brief to his staff to be courteous during the operation and the impressive cooperation of the student hall leaders were both borne out by the fact that during the search there was no ugly incident. When a count of what were recovered was taken, it was discovered that a total of not less than 120 library books were so recovered at Nsukka. Enugu yielded 33. Of these, twenty-one showed clear evidence of theft; forty books although illegally removed from the library, were still kept intact by the offending students; over twenty belong to other libraries and these have been already contacted; and the rest were long overdue books. Perhaps, more rewarding than the actual volumes recovered was the effect of the search on the undergraduates, generally. A good number of unborrowed books found their way into the bathrooms in the halls of residence and some were also seen at odd corners here and there in the campus. These are now back in the University library. The search also triggered off a wave in the return of overdue books and more prompt attitude to overdue notices.

The 'hawks' among Nsukka librarians are advocating that the scope of this surprise search should be extended to be such that every hall is hit a number of times over a given period. They do not agree again that it is any longer in the best interests of their profession for their entire time to be concentrated on the traditional demands of librarianship to the total exclusion of this serious challenge; instead, they argue, a balance should be struck in the time that should go to both of these important though competing demands.

References

[1] Only the University College, Ibadan (University of Ibadan from 1962) founded in 1948, is in fact up to 20 years old.

[2] Standards for College Libraries, *College and Research Libraries* v.20 no. 4 (July 1959) p.275.

[3] Ibadan. University. Institute of Librarianship *Standards of practice for West African Libraries: proceedings of a seminar held at the Institute, 15–16 April, 1967* ed. by John Dean. Ibadan [The Institute] 1969 p.43 [Oni-Orisan].

[4] The University College, Ibadan, started with 10,000 volumes inherited from the Yaba Higher College; it acquired another 10,000 from the Dyke Collection and 7,000 from the British Council. The Henry Carr, Library of 18,000 volumes, especially with its prized Africana, is so far, its greatest single endowment.

[5] Metcalf, Keyes D: *Planning academic and research library buildings*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1965, p.75.

[6] Student-looters hit the library, *Lagos Weekend*, March 3, 1972, p.4.

The Standing Conference of African University Libraries – "SCAUL"

Rita Pankhurst

The idea of a permanent association of head librarians of African Universities is more than nine years old. It resulted from the Leverhulme Inter-Universities Conference on the Needs and Problems of University Librarians in Tropical Africa, held in Salisbury, Rhodesia from September 14 to 25, 1969. Representatives of twenty-one universities and colleges were able to sit down and talk together for the first time. An impressive list of resolutions was drawn up, dealing with the status and responsibilities of the University Library Committee, university library buildings, the education and training of librarians, library statistics and library cooperation, especially among African universities. The Conference appointed a Standing Continuation Committee to publish a Newsletter and to meet at intervals to consider matters relating to university library development in Africa, including ways in which University Librarians may be kept in touch with one another.

The *SCAUL Newsletter* appeared more or less annually until 1971. It provided valuable information on developments in Africa not only for University Librarians in Africa, but for interested persons and institutions in other continents. Subjects dealt with included news; library education and training; library legislation; budgets; salaries and status of librarians; technical services; resources and bibliography for African studies; library binderies, printing and photographic units, and personal news about librarians.

The Continuation Committee was not so successful, however, in finding sponsors for a continent-wide inaugural meeting, let alone for the biannual

meetings envisaged in 1964. The first opportunity for a meeting of SCAUL members was during the International Conference on African Bibliography held at the University College of Nairobi in 1967. It was decided to elect a new committee and to publish in the *SCAUL Newsletter* a questionnaire concerning the membership, the role and the finances of SCAUL.

Electing a new committee by ballot vote took ten months; to obtain 23 out of a possible 28 answers to the questionnaire took a year. Eventually the new committee was mandated to continue to operate SCAUL as a consultative body of chief librarians and to try to extend membership more widely in Africa. The committee first met in 1969 by courtesy of the Commonwealth Foundation which sponsored a conference of librarians from Commonwealth Universities in Africa at the University of Zambia in Lusaka from 25 to 28 August. The two non-Commonwealth SCAUL Committee members attended the Conference as observers.

The important decision was made to abandon the ambition of continent-wide meetings and instead to organise most activities of SCAUL around Area Organisations, each with considerable autonomy. Each area was to elect one representative to the Central Committee, on which would sit in addition *ex officio*, and elected for five year terms, the Editor of the *Newsletter* and the Secretary/convener – the second part of whose title was an expression of hope for a prosperous future. The Committee was kept small so that business could be conducted by post between a few points on the continent; additional liaison was to be provided by the *Newsletter*, whose editor was to receive £1 per member from area membership fees. The other part of such fees was to be paid directly to the conveners of the next area meetings.

Membership of SCAUL was to be free but to entitle members to no privileges. Area membership on the other hand was to entail membership fees, to be fixed by each area internally. Paid-up area members were to receive the *Newsletter*, and were to be entitled to attend conferences and receive copies of Proceedings and information circulars. Another decision opened membership of SCAUL to chief librarians of universities eligible for membership of the Association of African Universities. It was thus possible to offer membership to universities north of the Sahara.

The aims of SCAUL were defined as:

1. To keep members informed of each other's activities and, wherever possible, to correlate such activities in the interest of all, and
2. To support and develop university library services in the areas covered by SCAUL.

The structure and aims agreed at Lusaka were subsequently approved by all eighteen respondents to a second postal ballot, which once again took many months.

As the seven representatives of university libraries in Eastern Africa present at Lusaka had shown enthusiasm about the idea of area organisations, they took the opportunity to convene a preliminary meeting of what was later to become SCAUL-Eastern Area. The inaugural meeting took place in Addis Ababa at Haile Sellassie I University from 10 to 13 February 1971. In attendance were delegates representing the University Libraries of Ethiopia, Kenya, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

The Conference heard and discussed papers on national and regional bibliography in Eastern Africa, the exchange of publications within the area, the acquisition of African government publications, classification and cataloguing of Africana, and education for librarianship in Eastern Africa. Resolutions were addressed to Universities and Governments in the area, as well as to the Organisation of African Unity. A regional constitution was adopted and a chairman was elected to serve for the next two meetings and to represent SCAULEA on the Central SCAUL Committee.

The *Proceedings* were published in 1971, with assistance from the Ford Foundation, which also contributed towards conference expenses; copies were distributed free of charge to members and other interested parties.

The second meeting of SCAULEA was held at the University of Mauritius from April 11 to 14, 1973, with assistance from the Canadian International Development Research Center, the Commonwealth Foundation and the French Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique. The Conference was again an intimate one with only eleven participants, seven external observers and four local observers. It was a disappointment that neither Rwanda nor Burundi, whose university librarians had expressed a wish to join, were represented. In other respects, however, the compact nature of the meeting made discussion both practical and fruitful.

The years between the conferences had seen rapid growth in Eastern African University Libraries. Papers discussed relatively sophisticated library topics such as the relationship of documentation services to libraries, or research in library management and services. The need for a regional post-graduate school of librarianship, first defined at Addis Ababa in 1971, was strongly felt and it was decided to seek assistance for the establishment of such a school.

The third meeting is to take place in Dar-es-Salaam in 1975.

Meanwhile, on the western side of the Continent, the Librarian of Lagos University, a SCAUL

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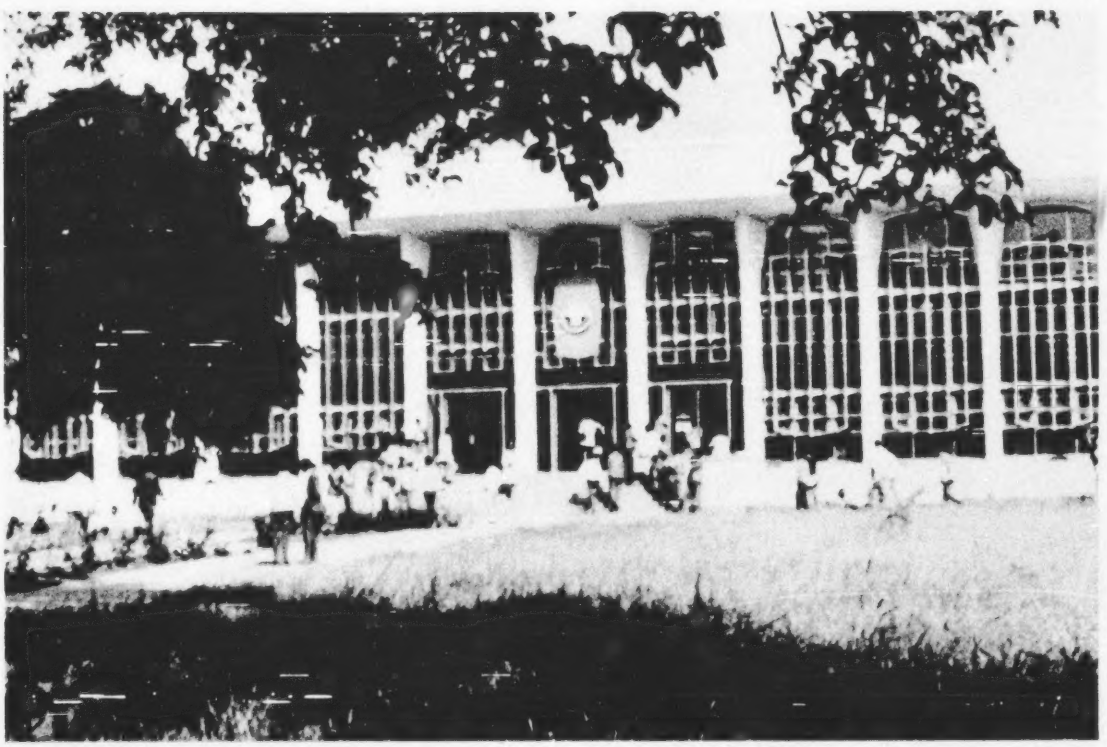

The John F. Kennedy Library, Haile Sellassie I University – host to the inaugural conference of SCAULEA

Central Committee member who had attended the Addis Ababa meeting as an observer, held a postal ballot to establish agreement about a western area organisation. He then convened the inaugural meeting of SCAULWA in Lagos, from 4 to 8 April 1972, with the assistance of the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the UNESCO International Book Year Committee, the University of Lagos, the Commonwealth Foundation and the British Council.

The Conference brought together fourteen university librarians from Cameroon, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Papers were read and resolutions passed on the development of national bibliographic control, library cooperation,

organisation of materials for research, and training facilities for library personnel. A forward-looking position was taken on the need for an active role for librarians in collecting, transcribing and documenting African oral traditions.

In its turn SCAULWA approved an area constitution, as well as a draft constitution for the parent body, which was subsequently approved by postal ballot by thirty-two universities. The next meeting was arranged to take place at the University of Dakar, Senegal in April 1974.

So far SCAUL has had only informal links with other institutions and associations, but it hopes to develop formal links in the future. The Association of African Universities has taken an interest in all SCAUL activities. At meetings there has been regular representation from African library schools and the following bodies, among others, have sent observers to area conferences: the International Federation of Library Associations, the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas, the Library of Congress, the Organisation of African Unity, the Standing Conference of National and University Libraries, the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

The recently approved SCAUL Constitution provides for associate membership to be accorded to other university libraries on application to the Central Committee. One American university library has already applied. To date SCAUL has thirty-seven members in thirty African countries, two of which – Egypt and Libya – are north of the Sahara.

It may be said that SCAUL is fulfilling its aims of inter-library communication and cooperation with some success. Though the writer does not subscribe to the view that it is only the informal aspects of conferences which are of any value, the fact that in each area most university librarians know each other is of great help in eliciting prompt responses to requests for material and information. Exchanges of publications have improved but exchanges of staff have not so far been undertaken, largely because the training is still in process in many of the younger institutions. Many ideas have been exchanged, especially on the role of the library and the librarian in university planning and in the area of budget strategy. No single spectacular venture can so far be attributed to SCAUL or to its area organisations, but its philosophy has been exemplified by its attitude to African bibliography. Rather than press, at this stage, for a computerised continent-wide bibliographic centre, it was felt that firm foundations should first be laid in each individual country. The results of such local bibliographic work could then be exchanged, each country contributing activity in its own territory where there is easier access and control.

The difficulties facing SCAUL will be familiar to other organisations attempting to span the African continent. There is the necessary exclusion of important institutions whose parent institutions are for the time being not eligible for membership of the Association of African Universities. There is the, perhaps equally temporary, communications problem on a continent where surface mail can take six months to a year to cross from East to West, where even air mail takes weeks, and where distance discourages travel. There are language barriers which are likely to grow as a greater number of local languages become official in various countries.

Over all looms the financial problem. A news-sheet can be published fairly cheaply and can be paid for by subscriptions, many of which can be expected from Africanist libraries abroad; postage and the clerical expenses of the organisation's secretary can be borne in turn by the more prosperous universities; some universities have the funds and the broad-mindedness to pay or supplement the expenses of their members attending conferences.

For the newer and poorer institutions this is not always feasible; a few thousand pounds will be needed to cover transport and other costs of these participants as well as conference expenses, especially the publication of the *Proceedings*. If only a few institutions are represented, discussions become unrepresentative and meaningless, and decisions arrived at may not be generally implemented.

So far funds have been gathered on an *ad hoc* basis by appealing to various donors. If SCAUL and similar associations are to survive they must have regular sources of funds so that they can meet at intervals of a few years, if not more frequently. No doubt the Association of African Universities has given this matter some thought. A percentage levy on all university budgets for professional gatherings may be an answer.

For the time being one may say, with apologies to Polonius, that it is advisable to operate regionally, relying on a continent-wide news-sheet for regular information. A very small central liaison organ, empowered to make decisions without interminable ballot reference to the entire membership, would be more effective than a larger, more representative, committee. Small interested groups should meet at regular but infrequent intervals. English-speaking university personnel should be encouraged to learn enough French to be able to understand a French speaker and vice-versa, thus saving the expense and *ennui* of simultaneous translation.

SCAUL has been lucky in finding funds for its regional meetings. It remains to be seen whether its luck will hold. If it will not, only more university self-reliance offers an alternative for SCAUL and other organisations of a similar nature.

Materials for African Studies: the Contribution of SCOLMA

Patricia M. Larby

During 1961 the Royal Institute of International Affairs was the scene of a number of meetings by librarians and other interested persons concerned with the problems of supply of research materials from African countries which were achieving independence from colonial rule. Western students were beginning to show an increasing interest in developments in new African countries and, in consequence, there was a rising demand for access to government documents and similar materials published in these countries.

Indigenous publishing in Africa has never been large and, apart from South Africa and the newer publishing industries of Nigeria and Kenya, is still largely confined to the official publications issued by government departments and, to a lesser extent, by universities and research organisations. In 1961 however, the acquisition of research materials published in Africa and acquired by British libraries was so limited as to be a cause for serious concern. A survey which had been carried out several months previously by Miss O.M. Bertie showed that acquisition of such material was patchy and in some categories, such as newspapers, material was acquired and often discarded, without reference to holdings elsewhere. Some countries' output appeared to be acquired by no library in Britain at all.

This was a disquieting situation for the librarians who knew that the demand for such materials was increasing and that the difficulties of acquisition were not easily to be overcome. Governments in colonial territories which had formerly presented copies of their official material to certain libraries began, on independence, to withdraw these facilities, and the absence of adequate bibliographies and bookshops in Africa was a further aggravation.

In an effort to find a solution to these problems it was decided to form a small working party which would investigate further and suggest ways in which measures could be taken to deal with them. The result was the formation of the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa in 1962 which began its task by asking its member libraries to define their acquisitions policies regarding African materials, seeking cooperation in the acquisition of expensive serial publications, developing arrangements with librarians or individuals in Africa prepared to assist with obtaining materials leading to the production of a joint acquisitions list.

In 1963, SCOLMA, as the group became known, was awarded £2,500 by the Leverhulme Trust, the first of a number of grants from various sources, to further work on African bibliography. This money was used to employ a part-time bibliographer, Mrs. Miriam Alman, whose first task was to update and continue the work of Miss Bertie. Mrs. Alman began by compiling a list of African published periodicals and circulating it to libraries asking them to indicate any titles which were held. On the basis of replies received it was possible to show the coverage of African journals in Britain, to identify gaps and to ask libraries to consider filling the more important.

This was a beginning of SCOLMA's bibliographical activity. In 1963 a *Directory of libraries and special collections on Africa* was compiled by Robert Collison, a work which has proved its value over the years and which in 1973 was published in its 3rd edition. Another useful compilation was the work which became known as *United Kingdom publications and theses on Africa.* Originating from *Theses on Africa accepted by universities in the United Kingdom* published in 1964, *U.K. pubs.*, as it is known among SCOLMA members, has continued to record current British writing on Africa including not only books but also journal articles and references to Africa in *Hansard.* The latest issue to appear covers 1967/68 and a further volume covering 1969/70 will shortly go to press. At the time of writing the future of *U.K. pubs.* is uncertain and the preparation of future volumes has been suspended while an assessment is made of its use.

SCOLMA's journal, *Library materials on Africa,* began publication in 1962 shortly after the group was formed, to act as a link between members and to report the activities of the Committee. Published three times a year it was a vehicle for reporting on current African bibliography, summarising news items from journals published in Africa, recording acquisitions of African periodicals by member libraries and publishing articles on the problems of acquisition and bibliography of African material.

SCOLMA's publications are issued to members free of charge and among the more recent are *Debates of African legislatures,* compiled by Miriam Alman which is a union list of holdings in British libraries, *African newspapers on microfilm,* compiled by Malcolm KcKee, and John Ndegwa's *Printing and publishing in Kenya,* an M.A. dissertation for the

University of London which provides a useful survey of the growth of the two industries in one African country.

Currently in preparation are two works on African periodicals. The lists of African periodicals compiled by Mrs. Alman were issued as supplements to *Library materials on Africa* between 1965 and 1970. It has now been decided to update these and amalgamate them into one comprehensive list, arranged according to country, listing so far as possible all periodicals published, past and present, and giving locations in British libraries. This mammoth task has been undertaken by Carole Travis of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies and is now nearing completion. It is envisaged that the finished work will total more than 14,000 titles.

Also to be published shortly is Victor Parry's *List of African periodicals held in the library of the British Museum (Natural History)* which will supplement the larger work being prepared by Mrs. Travis.

SCOLMA's work has not been entirely in the field of bibliographical publications however. Its major preoccupation continues to be the problem of acquisition and this is still as difficult of solution as ever even taking into account the growth of commercial publishers and bookshops in many African countries. Indigenous writing is still not plentiful in spite of the work in promoting African authorship by such organisations as the East African Literature Bureau and the growth of the so called 'market literature' in Onitsha, Nigeria. Government printers continue as the largest producers of printed material in most African countries though in none of them is the government printer the sole producer of all official material. An account of the difficulties which can be experienced in acquiring official documents was given by Hans Lass to the meeting of the Standing Conference of African University Librarians (SCAUL) in Addis Ababa in February 1971.[1] Many booksellers are unwilling to involve themselves in the expense and time required to service export orders and even less to publicise current local publications. National bibliographies do not exist in many countries and, where they do, they often appear only annually or less frequently so that their usefulness as a source for current book selection is negligible. There are exceptions of course, Nigeria's national bibliography is issued quarterly and so is South Africa's; but Malawi's appears only annually and Tanzania's, after a good start, has become progressively more and more behind while Kenya, one of the most prosperous of developing African countries has none at all. Librarians are left to rely upon accessions lists from African libraries the contents of which are usually more up to date and therefore of more immediate value than the national bibliographies. The acquisitions of African materials has never been an easy task for the librarian but the situation is showing faint signs of improvement.

In 1963 SCOLMA embarked on a pilot scheme of cooperative purchase of current materials with the assistance of Mrs. Margaret Amosu, a librarian on the staff of the Ibadan University Library. As the library at that time was responsible for the compilation of *Nigerian publications*, the national bibliography, and the University Bookshop was prepared to service the orders, it was felt that the scheme had a strong base from which to operate. The British end was handled by Mrs. Alman who made selection of material on behalf of participating libraries from lists submitted by Mrs. Amosu. Inevitably there were difficulties and by 1966 these had become so great that the scheme was abandoned. High postage rates, service charges particularly on gratis or low priced publications, delays in receiving the selection lists and payments to Nigeria all contributed to the final decision to discontinue.

But by 1965 SCOLMA was ready to try another scheme. An analysis of the replies received from the various surveys of holdings during the previous few years showed that British libraries were tending to acquire much of the same material and that some types of material and the output of certain countries were not being acquired at all. In order to rationalise purchases of African publications it was proposed by SCOLMA's Committee that member libraries should each accept responsibility for one or more African countries and seek to acquire their publications as comprehensively as possible. This would ensure some coverage of all African countries and would enable each library to build up contacts with libraries and booksellers and allow its staff to specialise to some extent in the bibliography of the country. Naturally, it was recognised that some libraries would not be able to devote much time or resources to their speciality and an effort was made to ensure that small libraries were offered 'small' countries for their speciality. Advantage was also taken of some libraries who offered to specialise in certain subjects, *e.g.* 'African trade unions' at Nuffield College, Oxford. By 1969 sufficient progress with the cooperative specialisation scheme had been made for SCOLMA to organise a one day conference at the University of Birmingham to discuss the progress of the scheme and the problems which had been encountered. The papers and proceedings of the conference were edited by Valerie Bloomfield and were published by Inter Documentation Company later the same year, forming a useful record of acquisitions policies and problems of African research materials.

SCOLMA has always been interested in the work of other organisations and individuals concerned with African acquisitions and bibliography.

It organises regular seminars which provide a means of discussing relevant problems and the opportunity to hear guest speakers. In 1967 several of its members attended the International Conference on African Bibliography in Nairobi and from time to time it has been represented at meetings of the Standing Conference of African University Librarians. In 1967 it participated in discussions on the preparation of a thesaurus of African tribe and language names. It also maintains regular links with the African Studies Association Library and Archives Committee of the United States and the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom (ASAUK). In fact cooperation with ASAUK culminated in 1973 with the two organisations agreeing to merge their two journals into a single title *African research and documentation* which, it is hoped, will combine the best features of *Library materials on Africa* and the *Bulletin* of ASAUK and offer information on current bibliography and documentation to Africanists and keep the librarians up to date on Africanist research.

SCOLMA's current membership is slightly in excess of 100 full and associate members who pay an annual subscription of £5.00 for which they receive the journal and all publications. Recently a category of personal membership has been introduced costing half the full membership rate which offers the journal and attendance at SCOLMA seminars and other meetings. New members, of course, are welcome and SCOLMA hopes to continue its work of producing bibliographies and other publications within its subject field. Suggestions for such works will be considered by the Committee for future publications programmes. Also, looking to the future, SCOLMA is exploring, with the ASAUK, the possibility of starting a cooperative microfilm project in Britain on the lines of a similar scheme in the United States. The aim of such a project would be to microfilm scarce or out of print material not easily available in British libraries either directly for sale to member libraries or for housing in a Centre where it would be available for consultation or loan. Meanwhile SCOLMA continues to hold seminars where African bibliographical and acquisitions problems can be discussed and to publish such works as are of use and importance to those working in the field of African studies.

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IUC SECONDMENT SCHEMES

The overseas universities in developing countries which are in association with the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas are still most anxious to secure experienced staff from British universities and polytechnics for periods of 2–4 years.

In recent years such staff have shown increasing and understandable reluctance to take up appointments overseas if this meant severing their links with their employer in Britain. The IUC has for some time been conscious of this difficulty and has been seeking ways of increasing the flow of experienced British staff holding established posts in this country into appointments in overseas universities associated with the IUC.

The IUC has now announced details of two new kinds of arrangements to help in securing experienced British staff to go overseas.

First, it is offering *Secondment Grants* to British universities and polytechnics willing to release an established member of staff to serve in an IUC-approved post overseas for two academic years or more, and to re-absorb him at the end of his overseas service. For each year of an approved absence, the IUC will make a payment to the home university or polytechnic.

Secondly, the IUC can now offer *Tenure Post Support Grants*. These are intended to apply where a British university (or polytechnic) department is asked to help in filling a key post overseas in an IUC-associated university and is prepared, in anticipation of a future vacancy, to recruit an extra permanent staff member. The IUC will make an annual payment over a four-year period provided that the department concerned releases a staff member or members for IUC approved service in an associated university over the same aggregate period.

British Book Aid for Overseas Universities

D. J. Collihole

The scholar's need for books is very nearly as old as scholarship itself and certainly as old as universities. Chaucer's famous 'Clerk of Oxenford's' collection of 'twenty books clad in blak or reed' seems modest by present-day standards but today's students face exactly the same problem: how to get access to the vast and daily increasing store of human knowledge and experience recorded in print.

Some students start with advantages. From their earliest childhood they have had access to books in their own homes, in school libraries and through a public library service reaching out into the smallest towns and villages. Once at the university they may find in their college and university libraries the accumulated wealth of hundreds of years of scholarly book collecting. These are the lucky ones, but they are very much in the minority. What is Britain doing to help the less fortunate in developing countries who have few or none of these advantages?

The Overseas Development Ministry has a programme of book aid, of which the following elements are relevant here: the Public Library Development Scheme; the Book Presentation Programme; the Low-Priced Books Scheme and the oddly named Bookseller Officer. All these schemes are administered for ODM by the British Council.

At first sight the relevance of a Public Library Development Scheme to university book needs may not be immediately obvious, yet the value of a good public library service to the educational system in any country is incalculable. Without it the base for all other kinds of library provision is lacking. The oldest example of British aid to public library development is to be seen in the Caribbean. In 1948 the British Council appointed a Director and for the next ten years provided funds for the creation of a Public Library Service, in partnership with the Jamaican Government. Twenty-one years later the service was entirely self-supporting, with a professional staff of Jamaican librarians and could boast in its commemorative publication of a stock of 581,406 volumes, made available to its membership of 296,485 readers through 13 Parish Libraries, 46 Branch Libraries, 139 Book Centres, and 64 Book-mobile stops. In addition it maintained a School Library Service, circulating 257,694 books to 791 schools. So from small acorns mighty oaks do grow.

Since 1959 the British Council, administering funds to assist in the development of library systems in developing Commonwealth countries, has helped to bring to birth national library services in Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Botswana and Swaziland; to develop and extend library services in Nigeria and Malaysia; and to introduce effective library services to Fiji, the Solomon Islands and the Seychelles. Assistance is now being given to projects in Malta, Swaziland and Zambia, while proposals from other countries are being actively considered.

All this represents an investment by Britain since 1959 of just under £1 million in public library development schemes, most of which are now entirely under local management and locally financed. This aid can take several forms: the provision of funds for capital expenditure on buildings, equipment, mobile libraries and book stock; the provision of expatriate experts to guide the initial planning and development during the first formative years; and the training of indigenous library staff to carry on when the service is well established. But there is one constant and invariable requirement: the recipient government must undertake to meet the necessary recurrent costs of whatever schemes are to be supported.

The Books Presentation Programme was introduced in June 1971 and is designed, as its name suggests, to make available British books and periodicals to educational institutions in developing countries able to establish both their need and their ability to put the material to effective use. All applications for presentations have to be submitted to the British Council in London by the appropriate British Council Representative, British High Commission or Embassy, or the IUC. A Books Co-ordinating Committee (on which are represented the British Council, the Department of Education and Science, for Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Inter-University Council, the Overseas Development Ministry and the Council for Technical Education and Training for Overseas Countries) guides the operation of the programme and examines proposals.

While the programme is flexible and has been able to meet a wide variety of needs, priority is given to projects which support educational development, particularly in universities, technical education, teacher training and curriculum development and other training and research institutions, especially in those where British experts and advisers are at work. So far universities have had the lion's share of the funds available (38% during the period January to December 1972 during which time 289 projects in 61 countries were approved by the Co-ordinating Committee to a total value of just under £300,000).

It is difficult from among so many to single out individual examples to show how the programme works. Many of the IUC associated universities of Africa have been notable beneficiaries including universities in Malawi, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Tanzania, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Some have been reinforced, with books alone, others with books and periodicals. Periodicals presentations can consist of subscriptions to current issues for a maximum of two years, or back runs of learned journals, the latter not normally extending back for longer than ten years, or five years in the case of medicine.

Not all presentations go to Commonwealth countries, though in view of their greater use of books in English these have so far predominated. Universities in Brazil, Colombia and other Latin American countries have received presentations and so have others in Francophone Africa, in Indonesia, Nepal and Thailand. In an effort to ensure that all recipients get the publications they really need, the selection of titles for presentation (within the terms approved by the Co-ordinating Committee) is left largely to the institutions concerned, with bibliographical assistance from U.K. advisers if required. The scheme is a continuing one for which ODM made £375,000 available in 1973/74. Its value is probably greatest where local lack of sterling prevents the purchase of British publications or where urgently needed libraries are being expanded with very inadequate funds.

Some readers of OVERSEAS UNIVERSITIES may remember from an article on the British Low-Priced Books Scheme in the July 1969 issue that the initials ELBS stand for English Language Book Society, or alternatively now, for Educational Low-Priced Books Series. These initials are well known to students in the 74 countries to which the books have been made available, since they often make possible the purchase of recommended or prescribed textbooks which would otherwise be far too expensive for them.

That is the whole object of the scheme: to help students (mostly at the tertiary level) in developing countries to buy their own individual copies of the British textbooks they need for their studies. All books published under the ELBS imprint are complete and unabridged, and include all the diagrams and illustrations of the standard editions, but with the help of a subsidy paid to the publishers they are sold at approximately one-third of the ordinary published price.

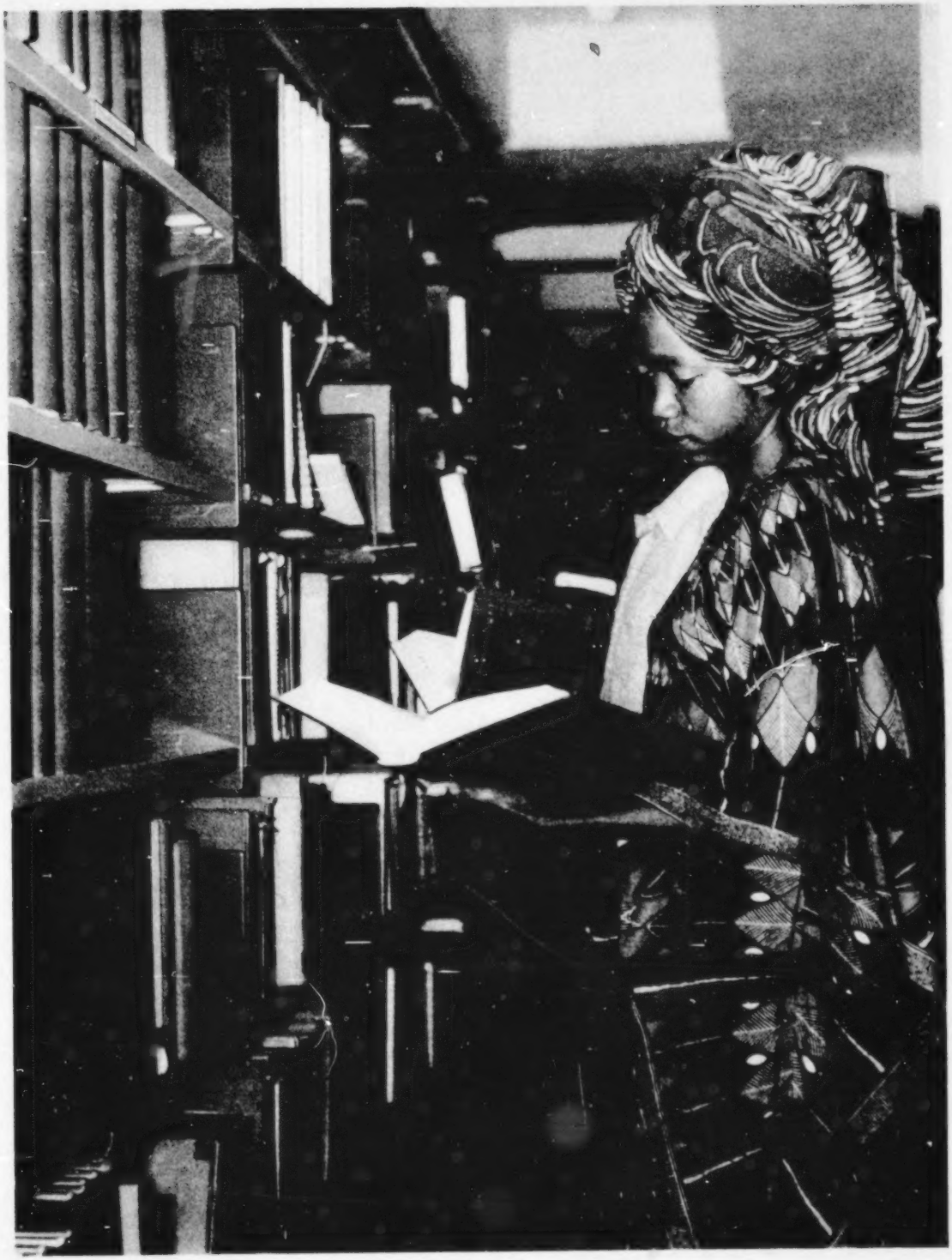
Statistics can make dull reading but in this case they show the scope and growth of the scheme. Since the first book was published in 1961, 612 titles have appeared in ELBS editions and of these 459 are now in print. Over 11 million copies have been printed and sales to date exceed 9½ million. The latter figure is particularly significant. Students the world over will only buy books if they really want them and these books are selling now at the rate of 1¼ million copies a year. The Scheme has cost the British government over £2 million so far and the ODM made available £465,000 for it in 1973/74.

Recommendations of titles for inclusion in this scheme are received from many sources, including overseas educational authorities and individual academics, ODM and British Council advisers, and publishers. Assessments on these titles are then obtained from specialists both in Britain and in developing countries.

The selection of titles for publication in ELBS editions is in the hands of an Advisory Committee of experts under the Chairmanship of Sir Arthur Norrington, formerly President of Trinity College, Oxford and before that Secretary to the Delegates of Oxford University Press. In response to demand the books cover a wide range of subjects, with particular emphasis on science, engineering, mathematics, medicine and on titles which assist in the learning and teaching of the English language. While many long established titles are included in the list, and indeed continue to be bestsellers, newer titles are being added all the time and out-of-date titles dropped. The Advisory Committee welcomes suggestions from academics in developing countries for titles they would like to see included in the scheme. Since it was originally launched for the benefit of students in the Indian Sub-Continent the Scheme has steadily increased its geographical coverage, first into South East Asia, then into Africa and in 1972 and 1973 to the South Pacific and the West Indies. In almost every case these extensions have been made in response to specific requests from the countries themselves, anxious to secure for their students access to this range of cheap but at the same time valuable textbooks.

ELBS editions are produced by their original publishers and sold by them through all the normal trade channels, which of course include university bookshops. Since more and more universities are opening bookshops, and because it is obviously desirable that they should operate as efficiently as possible in order to provide an effective service to the university (and often to the general public as well) ODM and the Book Development Council established in 1969 the post of Bookseller Officer, funded jointly in the proportion of 75% to 25%.

In response to requests passed through the British Council or the IUC the Bookseller Officer, Mr. Robert Martin, undertakes assignments (usually of about three months duration) at campus bookshops, advising on their organisation, financing and



In the Library at Chancellor College, University of Malawi.

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management, and carrying out on-the-spot training of their personnel. He can pay brief advisory visits, when these can be conveniently fitted into his programme, to universities contemplating the establishment of new bookshops (and advice *not* to open at all can on occasion be as constructive as detailed recommendations on the capital, accommodation and staff required to start a new bookshop). In addition, Mr. Martin runs instructional courses for booksellers in the private sector in whose hands, in a great many countries, the main business of book distribution lies. (These can be undertaken either in conjunction with, or separately from, a university assignment). So far, Mr. Martin has carried out advisory and training assignments as universities in 14 countries in Asia and Africa. For three successive years he has run a month-long series of residential courses for booksellers based on the University of Ibadan and has organised evening courses, again for public and private sector booksellers, in Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa, New Delhi and Bombay. Requests for return visits show that his services have been warmly appreciated. Mr. Martin was the Deputy Director of the British Council's Courses for overseas booksellers held in London in 1970 and 1972 and will be the Director of the 1974 course.

Each of these schemes contributes in its own way to make more books more readily available to would-be readers: by helping to create effective library services essential to educational development at every level and without which literacy campaigns are useless; by presenting books and periodicals to the libraries of institutions which need and are able to use them; by subsidising textbooks known to be widely used in developing countries for sale at a price students can afford to pay and by helping to improve the local distribution of indigenous and imported books. Perhaps a small contribution in face of the overwhelming world hunger for books, but who can assess the long term result of putting even a single book into the hands of a gifted teacher, surgeon or research worker?

University Bookselling in Nigeria: a brief comparison with the United Kingdom

D. C. Kemp

Whereas Britain has had 700 years to develop its universities to its present state, Nigeria's oldest university, that of Ibadan, celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1973. (Special postage stamps were issued by the Nigerian Post Office in November to mark the event). Until 1962, Ibadan was the only university in Nigeria. Today universities exist at Benin, Ibadan, Ife, Lagos, Nsukka and Zaria, with branch campuses at Calibar, Enugu, Ibadan (Ife branch) and Jos. The swift flowing river of events has speeded Nigeria's progress to becoming a modern and fully developed state of the twentieth century. Rapid development and fast growth have taken place amongst all educational institutions, more especially universities, and notwithstanding the fact that nothing like the funds available in the United Kingdom can be conjured up by the Nigerian government, the decade has seen the establishment of several large and flourishing universities.

By comparison with the United Kingdom, the universities are fortunate in that land, at the moment, is cheap and readily available. This had led to the establishment of the very large campus and in the case of the leading University, has produced a campus of city proportions. The University of Ibadan covers an area of several square miles and houses within it, not only lecture rooms and administrative buildings, but also a whole complex of halls of residence, hospital, theatre, staff recreation and union buildings together with large housing areas for both senior and junior staff. Population statistics are rather vague but it has been estimated that at least 25,000 people live on the campus. This pattern is repeated on a smaller scale throughout all the universities in the Federation.

The effects on the Bookshop of this self-containment are considerable. Unlike university bookshops in the United Kingdom, all the bookshops in the universities of Nigeria are owned by the universities themselves. They are part of the establishment even though they may be operating as limited companies. They are answerable only to their university and in the case of the limited companies, the universities are the only shareholders. This has resulted in each bookshop being purpose-built to serve the university concerned. It has meant that an opportunity has arisen for bookshops worthy of their universities to be established in proper premises. This is certainly an odd contrast with some of the makeshift premises provided in the United Kingdom.

The nature of the Nigerian climate has caused

open space premises to be provided for most bookshops. A judicious use of natural light has produced spacious and pleasing buildings. Due to import restrictions, nearly all furniture is now locally made; timber is still fairly cheap and the standard of craftsmanship very high. Consequently bookshop fittings are increasingly being tailor-made on site.

Most university bookshops are meeting places for the whole community. The bookshop serves as a centre at which people can arrange to meet, pass the time of day and, in passing, perhaps even buy a book! If the bookshop intends to remain an interesting focal point, its stocks will have to reflect very closely the needs of the community, not only from the students' point of view, but for everyone from the professor to domestic worker. Consequently, whilst there is a predominance of educational texts, a space has to be found for childrens' books, light-hearted fiction and general reading.

With students' fees running at £200 a year, with very few scholarships being available, most students depend on family support to pay their way. The per capita income of the country is less than £40 per annum. Consequently, apart from those who come from the elite homes, most students have a continual struggle whilst they are at university. Vacation work is non-existent and the student is confronted each term with the most appalling sums of money to find. This fact alone highlights the great difference between the student's purchasing power in Nigeria compared with his comparatively wealthy brother in the United Kingdom. Since he represents one out of 40,000 of the population, he is very fortunate even to have gained a place to university at all. Entry competition is very fierce.

One good thing that results from this fierce competition is that the student is, by and large, intensely enthusiastic. He is determined to graduate and his keenness makes him obtain his books the more readily. A survey carried out at Ibadan in 1971 showed that the average student spent £26 a year on his books, roughly double the average of the British student.

The Nigerian student is avidly interested in world affairs and to support this interest, he is likely to buy many books in this field, quite apart from those covering the actual discipline that he is studying. It should not be thought, however, that the Nigerian student is all work and no play. He reads as many of the latest paperback novels as his British counterpart. To cater for his tastes in this direction, the university bookshop must also see that a section similar to any British 'W.H. Smiths' is found.

The staff of Nigerian universities come from many nations and, whilst an increasing number are now indigenous, there is still a fairly large expatriate population on the staff. This results in a greater cross-section of literary tastes than would be found in Britain. There is no doubt that this mixture has resulted in a healthy flow of ideas, giving the Nigerian student a better chance for world understanding than might be found within the reach of the British student. The expatriate staff, in particular, are continually changing, which, whilst it is good for the bringing in of new ideas, can create problems for the Bookshop. The buyer is quite likely to have bought 100 copies of a book recommended by Mr. 'X' of America, in April, to find that by September, Mr. 'Y' of Ceylon has taken his place and requires a completely different set of texts anyway.

Universities in Nigeria are often receiving overseas delegations, individuals or parties of people with interests as far apart, for example, as those of professors of linguistics from German universities from those of Japanese oil men; from those of young, keen Americans seeking 'Nigerian culture' to those of afforestation experts. Nearly all of these visit the University Bookshop, seeking not only books on their special subject as applicable to Nigeria, but also background reading on the country itself, its anthropology, history or botany.

There are very many bookshops in Nigeria but most of them are of the proprietor/one assistant type and they cover the primary education field. Perhaps a dozen other bookshops serving the whole of the educational field exist and in certain instances these have grown up into large organisations, but in the main the bookshops established on the university campus are the only places where the student and staff of the university can hope to find the books needed. By contrast with the United Kingdom, selling opposition, with more bookshops chasing business than exists, has not yet appeared. The university bookseller can, with confidence, gauge his market. This enables him not only to purchase the recommended texts but, if he is venturesome, to anticipate or influence people's reading habits. Competition from other forms of recreation is not so great. Television is not available in all areas of Nigeria, nor is there the continuous availability of films and theatres. Much more reading is done and the book is given a higher place in society than in the United Kingdom.

The Booksellers' Association of the United Kingdom issues, from time to time, a table showing speed of deliveries from publishers. These range from three days for quick service, with slow publishers taking 21 days or more. Normally parcels from Europe to Nigeria come by sea and deliveries take anything from five to ten weeks. For books from the United States, the time can be counted in as many months. The Nigerian bookseller has one advantage over his British counterpart; he cannot altogether be

blamed for slow delivery. He is not expected to make frantic telephone calls and his neighbouring bookshop is not likely to beat him to it. This does not mean, however, that buyers can be diffident; indeed, in order to keep stocks up to date, they have to anticipate far more than would a bookseller in the United Kingdom if their bookshop be of any real use. Recommended and set texts for students have to be ordered in May for September. Christmas stock has to be ordered some time in August, to be sure that it reaches the market in time. It should be remembered that some 90% of the books sold in university bookshops in Nigeria come from overseas or are of overseas origin. Of these, possibly 60% come from the United Kingdom. There is no doubt that, in the next few years, this situation will be changed. A handful of university books have already originated from within Nigeria and an increasing number will appear within the next decade. Local stockists who now hold predominantly primary school books are increasing holdings of tertiary titles.

For its part the Nigerian government has, over the years, been very cooperative with booksellers in general and university booksellers in particular. Unlike so many countries, even those who are signatories to the UNESCO Conventions, books are admitted without import duty, nor do any local taxes prevail. Even at the height of the Civil War, when the Nigerian government was faced with the most chronic foreign exchange problems, members of the government gave every assistance to ensure that books were imported and that payments made as speedily as foreign currency reserves allowed.

There are few restrictions on what a bookseller may import, censorship is very limited and once again, even during the Civil War, the most controversial, anti-government matter was allowed in, almost without let or hindrance. This attitude on the part of the Nigerian government has meant that the university bookseller has been able to place before staff and students of the university many differing points of view, without fear. Whilst university booksellers in England might think this normal, this certainly is not the case throughout a greater part of the world.

The procurement and training of staff for university bookshops in Nigeria has, for some time, been a problem. Since no university bookshops existed 25 years ago and only one until 1962, staff with experience did not exist, nor was there to be found a properly trained staff with background and experience in any other form of bookselling. Consequently, completely raw and untrained staff have been taken and today there are approximately 100 experienced university bookselling staff. These range from the Acting General Manager of a large bookshop that has a staff of over 70 and several branches, to the Sales Assistant of, say, one year's experience in a smaller campus bookshop.

Staff have, themselves, proved very willing to learn and eager to serve. Through correspondence courses, many have taken booksellers' examinations, quite a few of them obtaining distinctions in their papers. More formal training has been given through aid received from the British Council. Each year a handful of booksellers visit the United Kingdom on British Council courses which have proved invaluable both through what they have learned formally and through contact they have made with publishers. Since 1971, and in the ensuing years, the British Council have also held training courses at the University of Ibadan and invaluable work has been carried out by Mr. R. Martin, the Bookseller Officer. These courses have not been restricted to university booksellers, but have been utilised by very many general booksellers throughout the country. It is to be hoped that such ventures, though costly to run each year, will be continued, as formal training is not yet easy to come by in the country. Great reliance has to be placed on correspondence courses which have their limitations. There is need for an Institute of Bookselling to be established in Nigeria and there can be no doubt on the part of all those who run university bookshops that such an institute would be of tremendous benefit, not only to the bookshops themselves, but as an educational aid in the growth of the country.

University bookselling is in its infancy in Nigeria but the signs are that the growth is in the right direction. The bookshops lack many of the facilities to be found in the United Kingdom. Telephones are often out of order – who would want to ring a publisher 4,000 miles away at £1 a minute anyway? It is difficult to keep in touch with branch shops often hundred miles away. Postal services tend to be rather slow.

Loss of items in transit causes months of delay and much correspondence and such losses run at a high rate. Little or no return can be made to publishers. These, however, are really very small items when compared with the enthusiasm and vitality to be found amongst university bookshops and their customers throughout the country, the like of which is not easily found in the United Kingdom.